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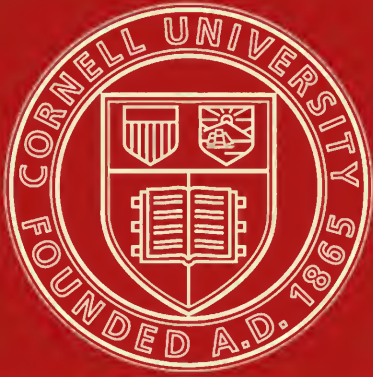












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*Painted by Sir George Beaumont Bart.*



*Engraved by S. W. Reynolds.*

PELE CASTLE.



# POEMS

BY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH:

INCLUDING

LYRICAL BALLADS,

AND THE

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES OF THE AUTHOR.

WITH ADDITIONAL POEMS,

A NEW PREFACE, AND A SUPPLEMENTARY ESSAY.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,  
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# DEDICATION.

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TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

ACCEPT my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you.—In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel, upon this occasion, a particular satisfaction; for by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known

to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for several of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets, of your Name and Family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace-dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—who have composed so many admirable Pictures from the suggestions of the same scenery. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this Region



excited your admiration ; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still-strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your Pencil, may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately

and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*Rydal Mount, Westmoreland,*

*February 1, 1815.*



## PREFACE.

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THE observations prefixed to that portion of these Volumes, which was published many years ago, under the title of “ Lyrical Ballads,” have so little of a special application to the greater part, perhaps, of this collection, as subsequently enlarged and diversified, that they could not with any propriety stand as an Introduction to it. Not deeming it, however, expedient to suppress that exposition, slight and imperfect as it is, of the feelings which had determined the choice of the subjects, and the principles which had regulated the composition of those Pieces, I have transferred it to the end of the second Volume, to be attended to, or not, at the pleasure of the Reader.



In the Preface to that part of “The Recluse,” lately published under the title of “The Excursion,” I have alluded to a meditated arrangement of my minor Poems, which should assist the attentive Reader in perceiving their connection with each other, and also their subordination to that Work. I shall here say a few words explanatory of this arrangement, as carried into effect in the present Volumes.

The powers requisite for the production of poetry are, first, those of observation and description, i. e. the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the Describer : whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time ; as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a

state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as the Translator or Engraver ought to be to his Original. 2dly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a Poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface, before-mentioned). 3rdly, Reflection,—which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most



fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment,—to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, the Narrative,—including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark, is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself

the source from which every thing primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, *Arma virum que cano* ; but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value : the *Iliad* or the *Paradise Lost* would gain little in our estimation by being chaunted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale ;—so, that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2ndly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque ; in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents ; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, in as much as it proceeds by dialogue ; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon mu



sic, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the Lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3rdly, The Lyrical,—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the “Seasons” of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone’s School-mistress, The Cotter’s Saturday Night of Burns, The Twa Dogs of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton, Beattie’s Minstrel, Goldsmith’s “Deserted Village.” The Epitaph, the Inscription,

the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the Georgics of Virgil, “the Fleece” of Dyer, Mason’s “English Garden,” &c.

And, lastly, philosophical satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of Poetry.

Out of the three last classes has been constructed a composite species, of which Young’s Night Thoughts and Cowper’s Task are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each



of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes ; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view ; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, “ The Recluse.” This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, any thing material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there

is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this ; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them ; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem it is placed under the head of imagination, and vice versâ. Both the above Classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of " Poems founded on the Affections ;" as might this latter from those, and from the class " Proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.



It may be proper in this place to state, that the Extracts in the 2nd Class entitled “ Juvenile Pieces,” are in many places altered from the printed copy, chiefly by omission and compression. The slight alterations of another kind were for the most part made not long after the publication of the Poems from which the Extracts are taken. These Extracts seem to have a title to be placed here as they were the productions of youth, and represent implicitly some of the features of a youthful mind, at a time when images of nature supplied to it the place of thought, sentiment, and almost of action ; or, as it will be found expressed, of a state of mind when

“ the sounding cataract

Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms were then to me  
An appetite, a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, or any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye”—

I will own that I was much at a loss what to select of these descriptions; and perhaps it would have been better either to have reprinted the whole, or suppressed what I have given.

None of the other Classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however



humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves: the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible—the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification—as to deprive the Reader of a voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman;

“ He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.”

I come now to the consideration of the words *Fancy* and *Imagination*, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. “A man,” says an intelligent Author, has “*imagination*,” in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which

*images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φανταζειν* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterized. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced.—*British Synonyms discriminated, by W. Taylor.*

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other



instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology ; he takes up the original word as his guide, his conductor, his escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images ; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them : each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that Faculty of which the Poet is "all compact ;" he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body-forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape ; or what is left to characterise fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity ?——Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a Class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind,

of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the Shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his Farm, thus addresses his Goats;

“ Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro  
Dumosa *pendere* procul de rupe ordebo.”

—————“ half way up  
*Hangs* one who gathers samphire,”

is the well-known expression of Shakespear, delineating an ordinary image upon the Cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats



nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey ; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

“ As when far off at Sea a Fleet descried  
*Hangs* in the clouds, by equinoxial winds  
Close sailing from Bengala or the Isles  
Of Ternate or Tydore, whence Merchants bring  
Their spicy drugs ; they on the trading flood  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: so seem'd  
Far off the flying Fiend.”

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word, *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image : First, the Fleet, an aggregate of many Ships, is represented as one mighty Person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters ; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself,

and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime object to which it is compared.

From images of sight we will pass to those of sound :

“ Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove *broods* ;”  
of the same bird,

“ His voice was *buried* among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze ;”

“ O, Cuckoo ! shall I call thee *Bird*,  
Or but a wandering *Voice* ?”

The Stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird ; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the Bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. “ His voice was buried



among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar, and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shade in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

Shall I call thee Bird

Or but a wandering Voice?

This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the Cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the Cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of Spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with pro-

perties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to react upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the Goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the Shepherd, contemplating it from the seclusion of the Cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other !



“ As a huge Stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,  
Wonder to all who do the same espy  
By what means it could thither come, and whence ;  
So that it seems a thing endued with sense,  
Like a Sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf  
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun himself.  
Such seemed this Man ; not all alive or dead,  
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.  
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,  
And moveth altogether if it move at all.”

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The Stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the Sea-beast ; and the Sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone ; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man ; who is divested of so much of the

indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the Cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power : but the Imagination also shapes and *creates* ; and how ? By innumerable processes ; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—alternations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced “ Sailing from Bengala,” “ They,” i. e. the “ Merchants,” representing the Fleet resolved into a Multitude of Ships, ‘ ply’ their voyage towards the extremities of the earth : “ So” (referring to the word “ As” in the commencement) “ seemed the flying Fiend ;” the image of his Person act-



ing to recombine the multitude of Ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. “So seemed,” and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet’s mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

*Modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.*

Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from Heaven the rebellious Angels,

Attended by ten thousand, thousand Saints

He onward came: far off his coming shone,—

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction, “His coming!”

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division

of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, “ draws all things to one, which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessaries, take one colour and serve to one effect\*.” The grand store-house of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, is the prophetic and lyrical parts of the holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton, to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome because the anthropomorphitism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those

\* Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.



countries too much to the bondage of definite form ; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul ; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions ; and at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of Una is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakespear are an inexhaustible source.

“ I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,

I never gave you Kingdoms, called you Daughters.”

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention ; yet justified by a recollection of the insults which the Ignorant, the Incapable, and the Presumptuous have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself ; I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given, in these unfavourable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions ; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

I dismiss this subject with observing—that, in the series of Poems placed under the head of Imagination, I have begun with one of the earliest processes of Nature in the development of this faculty. Guided by one of my own



primary consciousnesses, I have represented a commutation and transfer of internal feelings, co-operating with external accidents to plant, for immortality, images of sound and sight, in the celestial soil of the Imagination. The Boy, there introduced, is listening, with something of a feverish and restless anxiety, for the recurrence of the riotous sounds which he had previously excited; and, at the moment when the intenseness of his mind is beginning to remit, he is surprised into a perception of the solemn and tranquillizing images which the Poem describes.—The Poems next in succession exhibit the faculty exerting itself upon various objects of the external universe; then follow others, where it is employed upon feelings, characters, and actions; and the Class is concluded with imaginative pictures of moral, political, and religious sentiments.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterized as the Power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has

styled it, “ the aggregative and associative Power,” my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from every thing but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

“ In shape no bigger than an agate stone  
On the fore-finger of an Alderman.”

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pom-



pey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas;—because these, and if they were a million times as high, it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, “His stature reached the sky!” the ilimitable firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature than upon expression and effect, less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal, properties:—moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprizing, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon

the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images, trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur, but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished.—Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our Nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal.—Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her



own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalship with the Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse ; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples.—Referring the Reader to those inestimable Volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost* ;

“ The dews of the evening most carefully shun,  
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the Sun.”

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathizing Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

“ Sky lowered, and muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completion of the mortal sin.”

The associating link is the same in each instance ;—dew or rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprize is the effect in the former case, a flash of surprize and nothing more ; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects of the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in Nature so manifested ; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as “ Earth had, before, trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan.”

Awe-stricken as I am by contemplating the operations of the mind of this truly divine Poet, I scarcely dare venture to add that “ An address to an Infant,” which the Reader will find under the Class of Fancy in the present Volumes, exhibits something of this communion and interchange of instruments and functions between the two powers ; and is, accordingly, placed last in the



class, as a preparation for that of Imagination which follows.

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "A palsied King," and yet a military Monarch,—advancing for conquest with his Army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the Poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. He retires from the Foe into his fortress, where

" a magazine

Of sovereign juice is cellared in.

Liquor that will the siege maintain

Should Phœbus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist

the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

'Tis that, that gives the Poet rage,  
And thaws the gelly'd blood of Age ;  
Matures the Young, restores the Old,  
And makes the fainting Coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet ;

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Then let the chill Scirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar,

Whilst we together jovial sit  
Careless, and crown'd with mirth and wit ;  
Where, though bleak winds confine us home,  
Our fancies round the world shall roam.



We'll think of all the Friends we know,  
And drink to all worth drinking to ;  
When having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want healths than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply  
Our friendships with our charity ;  
Men that remote in sorrows live,  
Shall by our lusty Brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the Wanting into Wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
The Afflicted into joy ; th' Opprest  
Into security and rest.

The Worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The Brave shall triumph in success,  
The Lovers shall have Mistresses,  
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,  
And the neglected Poet, Bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,  
Whilst we ourselves do all we would ;  
For, freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are ?”

It remains that I should express my regret at the necessity of separating my compositions from some beautiful Poems of Mr. Coleridge, with which they have been long associated in publication. The feelings, with which that joint publication was made, have been gratified; its end is answered, and the time is come when considerations of general propriety dictate the separation. Three short pieces (now first published) are the work of a Female Friend; and the Reader, to whom they may be acceptable, is indebted to me for his pleasure; if any one regard them with dislike, or be disposed to condemn them, let the censure fall upon him, who, trusting in his own sense of their merit and their fitness for the place which they occupy, *extorted* them from the Authoress.

When I sate down to write this preface it was my intention to have made it more compre-



hensive ; but as all that I deem necessary is expressed, I will here detain the reader no longer :—what I have further to remark shall be inserted, by way of interlude, at the close of this Volume.

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## *ERRATA AND CORRECTIONS.*

### FIRST VOLUME.

- Page 82. 12th line from top, for “ Usurpign,” read “ Usurping.”  
82. 16th line, for “ mites,” read “ times.”  
101. 8th, and 9th, for “ or,” read “ nor.”  
162. 2d Stanza; 4th line, for “ His singing-bird,” read “ This singing bird.”  
170. first line, for “ though,” read “ thou.”

### SECOND VOLUME.

- Page 26. last line, for “ slacky,” read “ slackly.”  
173. 4th line from bottom, for “ And pleas’d,” read “ Am pleased.”  
231. 1st line, for “ that,” read “ which.”  
250. The title, for “ of the,” read “ to the.”  
250. 5th line from bot. for “ would extend,” read “ should extend.”  
308. 2nd Stanza, for, “ of his ill gotten,” read “ with this ill gotten.”  
319. 8th line from bot. for “ the person,” read “ the persons.”

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# POEMS

REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD.

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I.

MY heart leaps up when I behold  
A Rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a Man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is Father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.



## II.

*TO A BUTTERFLY.*

STAY near me—do not take thy flight!  
A little longer stay in sight!  
Much converse do I find in Thee,  
Historian of my Infancy!  
Float near me; do not yet depart!  
Dead times revive in thee:  
Thou bring'st, gay Creature as thou art!  
A solemn image to my heart,  
My Father's Family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,  
The time, when in our childish plays,  
My Sister Emmeline and I  
Together chased the Butterfly!  
A very hunter did I rush  
Upon the prey:—with leaps and springs  
I followed on from brake to bush;  
But She, God love her! feared to brush  
The dust from off its wings.

## III.

*FORESIGHT,**Or the Charge of a Child to his younger Companion.*

---

THAT is work of waste and ruin—  
Do as Charles and I are doing!  
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,  
We must spare them—here are many:  
Look at it—the Flower is small,  
Small and low, though fair as any:  
Do not touch it! summers two  
I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the Primrose, Sister Anne!  
Pull as many as you can.  
—Here are Daisies, take your fill;  
Pansies, and the Cuckow-flower:  
Of the lofty Daffodil  
Make your bed, and make your bower;  
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom;  
Only spare the Strawberry-blossom!



Primroses, the Spring may love them—  
 Summer knows but little of them:  
 Violets, a barren kind,  
 Withered on the ground must lie;  
 Daisies leave no fruit behind  
 When the pretty flowerets die;  
 Pluck them, and another year  
 As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power  
 To the favoured Strawberry-flower.  
 When the months of spring are fled  
 Hither let us bend our walk;  
 Lurking berries, ripe and red,  
 Then will hang on every stalk,  
 Each within its leafy bower;  
 And for that promise spare the flower!

## IV.

*C H A R A C T E R I S T I C S**Of a Child three Years old.*


---

---

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;  
 And Innocence hath privilege in her  
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;  
 And feats of cunning; and the pretty round  
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke  
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.  
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
 Not less if unattended and alone  
 Than when both young and old sit gathered round  
 And take delight in its activity,  
 Even so this happy Creature of herself  
 Is all sufficient: solitude to her  
 Is blithe society, who fills the air  
 With gladness and involuntary songs.  
 Light are her sallies as the tripping Fawn's  
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couched;  
 Unthought-of, unexpected as the stir  
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow flowers;  
 Or from before it chasing wantonly  
 The many-coloured images impressed  
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.



## V.

*ADDRESS TO A CHILD,**During a boisterous Winter Evening.*

By a female Friend of the Author.



WHAT way does the Wind come? What way does he go?  
He rides over the water, and over the snow,  
Through wood, and through vale; and o'er rocky height  
Which the goat cannot climb takes his sounding flight.  
He tosses about in every bare tree,  
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;  
But how he will come, and whither he goes  
There's never a Scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,  
And rings a sharp laram;—but if you should look  
There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow  
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
And softer than if it were covered with silk.

Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
 Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;  
 —Yet seek him,—and what shall you find in the place?  
 Nothing but silence and empty space,  
 Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,  
 That he's left for a bed for beggars or thieves!

As soon as 'tis daylight, to-morrow, with me  
 You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see  
 That he has been there, and made a great rout,  
 And cracked the branches, and strewn them about;  
 Heaven grant that he spare but that one upright twig  
 That looked up at the sky so proud and big  
 All last summer, as well you know,  
 Studded with apples, a beautiful show!

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,  
 And growls as if he would fix his claws  
 Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle  
 Drive them down, like men in a battle:  
 —But let him range round; he does us no harm  
 We build up the fire, we're snug and warm;  
 Untouch'd by his breath see the candle shines bright,  
 And burns with a clear and steady light;



Books have we to read,—hush ! that half-stifled knell,  
Methinks 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock bell.

—Come, now we'll to bed ! and when we are there  
He may work his own will, and what shall we care ?  
He may knock at the door,—we'll not let him in,  
May drive at the windows,—we'll laugh at his din ;  
Let him seek his own home wherever it be ;  
Here's a *cozie* warm House for Edward and me.

## VI.

*THE MOTHER'S RETURN.*

BY THE SAME.



A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is passed  
Since your dear Mother went away,—  
And she to-morrow will return;  
To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings! thought of joy!  
The eldest heard with steady glee;  
Silent he stood; then laughed amain,—  
And shouted, “Mother come to me!”

Louder and louder did he shout  
With witless hope to bring her near;  
“Nay, patience! patience, little Boy!  
Your tender Mother cannot hear.”

I told of hills, and far-off towns,  
And long, long vales to travel through;—  
He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,  
But he submits; what can he do?



No strife disturbs his Sister's breast ;  
 She wars not with the mystery  
 Of time and distance, night and day,  
 The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy  
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly ;  
 She dances, runs without an aim,  
 She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her Brother now takes up the note,  
 And echoes back his Sister's glee ;  
 They hug the Infant in my arms,  
 As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,  
 We rested in the garden bower ;  
 While sweetly shone the evening sun  
 In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done,—  
 Our rambles by the swift brook's side  
 Far as the willow-skirted pool  
 Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,  
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,  
 Of birds that build their nests and sing,  
 And “all since Mother went away !”

To her these tales they will repeat,  
 To her our new-born tribes will shew,  
 The goslings green, the ass’s colt,  
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

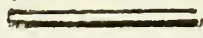
—But, see, the evening Star comes forth !  
 To bed the Children must depart ;  
 A moment’s heaviness they feel,  
 A sadness at the heart :

’Tis gone—and in a merry fit  
 They run up stairs in gamesome race ;  
 I too, infected by their mood,  
 I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past—and Oh the change !  
 Asleep upon their beds they lie ;  
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,  
 And closed the sparkling eye.



## VII.

*LUCY GRAY,**Or Solitude.*

OFt I had heard of Lucy Gray:  
And, when I crossed the Wild,  
I chanced to see at break of day  
The solitary Child.

No Mate, no comrade Lucy knew;  
She dwelt on a wide Moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the Fawn at play,  
The Hare upon the Green;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

“To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the Town must go;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow.”

“ That, Father! will I gladly do;  
 ’Tis scarcely afternoon—  
 The Minster-clock has just struck two,  
 And yonder is the Moon.”

At this the Father raised his hook  
 And snapped a faggot-band;  
 He plied his work ;—and Lucy took  
 The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:  
 With many a wanton stroke  
 Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
 That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:  
 She wandered up and down;  
 And many a hill did Lucy climb;  
 But never reached the Town.

The wretched Parents all that night  
 Went shouting far and wide;  
 But there was neither sound nor sight  
 To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the Moor;  
And thence they saw the Bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

And, turning homeward, now they cried  
“ In Heaven we all shall meet!”  
—When in the snow the Mother spied  
The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downward from the steep hill’s edge  
They tracked the footmarks small;  
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall:

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;  
And to the Bridge they came.

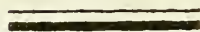
They followed from the snowy bank  
The footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank;  
And further there were none!



—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living Child ;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome Wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind ;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

## VIII.

*ALICE FELL;**Or Poverty.*

THE Post-boy drove with fierce career,  
For threatening clouds the moon had drowned;  
When suddenly I seemed to hear  
A moan, a lamentable sound.

As if the wind blew many ways  
I heard the sound,—and more and more :  
It seemed to follow with the Chaise,  
And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the Boy called out ;  
He stopped his horses at the word ;  
But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,  
Nor aught else like it could be heard.

The Boy then smacked his whip, and fast  
 The horses scampered through the rain ;  
 And soon I heard upon the blast  
 The voice, and bade him halt again.

Said I, alighting on the ground,  
 “ What can it be, this piteous moan ? ”  
 And there a little Girl I found,  
 Sitting behind the Chaise, alone.

“ My Cloak ! ” the word was last and first,  
 And loud and bitterly she wept,  
 As if her very heart would burst ;  
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

“ What ails you, Child ? ” she sobb’d, “ Look here ! ”  
 I saw it in the wheel entangled,  
 A weather-beaten Rag as e’er  
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

’Twas twisted betwixt nave and spoke ;  
 Her help she lent, and with good heed  
 Together we released the Cloak ;  
 A wretched, wretched rag indeed !



“ And whither are you going, Child,  
 To night along these lonesome ways ?”  
 “ To Durham” answered she half wild—  
 “ Then come with me into the chaise.”

She sate like one past all relief ;  
 Sob after sob she forth did send  
 In wretchedness, as if her grief  
 Could never, never, have an end.

“ My Child, in Durham do you dwell ?”  
 She check’d herself in her distress,  
 And said, “ My name is Alice Fell ;  
 I’m fatherless and motherless.”

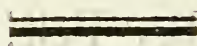
And I to Durham, Sir, belong.”  
 And then, as if the thought would choke  
 Her very heart, her grief grew strong ;  
 And all was for her tattered Cloak !

‘The chaise drove on; our journey’s end  
 Was nigh ; and, sitting by my side,  
 As if she’d lost her only friend  
 She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the Tavern-door we post ;  
Of Alice and her grief I told ;  
And I gave money to the Host,  
To buy a new Cloak for the old.

“ And let it be of duffil grey,  
As warm a cloak as man can sell !”  
Proud Creature was she the next day,  
The little Orphan, Alice Fell !

## IX.

*WE ARE SEVEN.*

———A SIMPLE child  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad;  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;  
—Her beauty made me glad.



“ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?”

“ How many? Seven in all,” she said,  
And wondering looked at me.

“ And where are they? I pray you tell.”  
She answered, “ Seven are we;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;  
And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“ You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be?”

Then did the little Maid reply,  
“ Seven boys and girls are we ;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree.”

“ You run about, my little Maid,  
 Your limbs they are alive;  
 If two are in the church-yard laid,  
 Then ye are only five.”

“ Their graves are green, they may be seen,”  
 The little Maid replied,  
 “ Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,  
 And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,  
 My kerchief there I hem;  
 And there upon the ground I sit—  
 I sit and sing to them.

And often after sun-set, Sir,  
 When it is light and fair,  
 I take my little porringer,  
 And eat my supper there.

The first that died was little Jane;  
 In bed she moaning lay,  
 Till God released her of her pain;  
 And then she went away.

So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And all the summer dry,  
Together round her grave we played,  
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you then," said I,  
"If they two are in Heaven?"  
The little Maiden did reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!  
Their spirits are in Heaven!"  
'Twas throwing words away: for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"



## X.

*ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS,**Showing how the Practice of Lying may be taught.*

I HAVE a Boy of five years old ;  
His face is fair and fresh to see ;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,  
Our quiet home all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,  
Our pleasant home, when Spring began,  
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
 To think—and think—and think again;  
 With so much happiness to spare,  
 I could not feel a pain.

My Boy was by my side, so slim  
 And graceful in his rustic dress!  
 And oftentimes I talked to him,  
 In very idleness.

The young lambs ran a pretty race;  
 The morning sun shone bright and warm;  
 “Kilve,” said I, “was a pleasant place;  
 And so is Liswyn farm.

My little Boy, which like you more,”  
 I said, and took him by the arm—  
 “Our home by Kilve’s delightful shore,  
 Or here at Liswyn farm?”

And tell me, had you rather be,”  
 I said, and held him by the arm,  
 “At Kilve’s smooth shore by the green sea,  
 Or here at Liswyn farm?”

In careless mood he looked at me,  
 While still I held him by the arm,  
 And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be  
 Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so;  
 My little Edward, tell me why."—  
 "I cannot tell, I do not know."—  
 "Why, this is strange," said I.

"For, here are woods, and green-hills warm:  
 There surely must some reason be  
 Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
 For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my Boy hung down his head,  
 He blushed with shame, nor made reply;  
 And five times to the Child I said,  
 "Why, Edward, tell me why?"

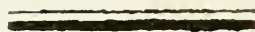
His head he raised—there was in sight,  
 It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
 Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
 A broad and gilded Vane.



Then did the boy his tongue unlock;  
And thus to me he made reply:  
“ At Kilve there was no weather-cock,  
And that’s the reason why.”

O dearest, dearest Boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.

## XI.

*RURAL ARCHITECTURE.*

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald  
Shore,

Three rosy-cheeked School-boys, the highest not more  
Than the height of a Counsellor's bag;  
To the top of GREAT HOW did it please them to climb;  
And there they built up, without mortar or lime,  
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as they lay;  
They built him and christened him all in one day,  
An Urchin both vigorous and hale;  
And so without scruple they called him Ralph Jones.  
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of his bones;  
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,  
And, in anger or merriment, out of the North  
Coming on with a terrible pother,  
From the peak of the crag blew the Giant away.  
And what did these School-boys?—The very next day  
They went and they built up another.

GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirl-mere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road between Keswick and Ambleside.



## XII.

*THE PET-LAMB,*

A PASTORAL.

---

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink;  
I heard a voice; it said, " Drink, pretty Creature, drink!"  
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied  
A snow-white mountain Lamb with a Maiden at its side.

No other sheep were near, the Lamb was all alone,  
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone;  
With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel,  
While to that Mountain Lamb she gave its evening meal.

The Lamb while from her hand he thus his supper took  
Seemed to feast with head and ears; and his tail with pleasure shook.

" Drink, pretty Creature, drink," she said in such a tone  
That I almost received her heart into my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a Child of beauty  
rare!

I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.  
Now with her empty Can the Maiden turned away;  
But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Towards the Lamb she looked; and from that shady place  
I unobserved could see the workings of her face:  
If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,  
Thus, thought I, to her Lamb that little Maid might sing

“What ails thee, Young One? What? Why pull so at  
thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? Well both for bed and board?  
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be;  
Rest, little Young One, rest; what is't that aileth thee?

“What is it thou wouldst seek? What is wanting to thy  
heart?

Thy limbs are they not strong? And beautiful thou art:  
This grass is tender grass; these flowers they have no  
peers;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears!

“ If the Sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen  
chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain;  
For rain and mountain storms! the like thou need'st not  
fear—

The rain and storm are things which scarcely can come here.

“ Rest, little Young One, rest; thou hast forgot the day  
When my Father found thee first in places far away;  
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by  
none;

And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

“ He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee home:  
A blessed day for thee! then whither wouldst thou roam?  
A faithful Nurse thou hast; the Dam that did thee wean  
Upon the mountain tops no kinder could have been.

“ Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee in  
this Can

Fresh water from the brook as clear as ever ran;  
And twice in the day when the ground is wet with dew  
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and new.



“ Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are  
now,

Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the plough;  
My Playmate thou shalt be; and when the wind is cold  
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

“ It will not, will not rest!—poor Creature, can it be  
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in  
thee?

Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,  
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor  
hear.

“ Alas, the mountain tops that look so green and fair!  
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come  
there;

The little Brooks that seem all pastime and all play,  
When they are angry, roar like Lions for their prey.

“ Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky;  
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.  
Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at thy chain?  
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again!”

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,  
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat;  
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,  
That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again did I repeat the song;  
“Nay,” said I, “more than half to the *Damsel* must  
    belong,  
For she looked with such a look, and she spake with such  
    a tone,  
That I almost received her heart into my own.”

## XIII.

THE  
*IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS;*  
 OR,  
*DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE\*.*  
 A PASTORAL.

---

## I.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy;  
 Among the hills the Echoes play  
 A never, never ending song,  
 To welcome in the May.  
 The Magpie chatters with delight;  
 The mountain Raven's youngling Brood  
 Have left the Mother and the Nest;  
 And they go rambling east and west  
 In search of their own food;  
 Or through the glittering Vapors dart  
 In very wantonness of heart.

\* *Ghyll* in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland is a short, and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for Waterfall.



## II.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,  
 Two Boys are sitting in the sun;  
 It seems they have no work to do  
 Or that their work is done.  
 On pipes of sycamore they play  
 The fragments of a Christmas Hymn;  
 Or with that plant which in our dale  
 We call Stag-horn, or Fox's Tail,  
 Their rusty Hats they trim:  
 And thus, as happy as the Day,  
 Those Shepherds wear the time away.

## III.

Along the river's stony marge  
 The Sand-lark chaunts a joyous song;  
 The Thrush is busy in the wood,  
 And carols loud and strong.  
 A thousand Lambs are on the rocks,  
 All newly born! both earth and sky  
 Keep jubilee; and more than all,  
 Those Boys with their green Coronal;  
 They never hear the cry,  
 That plaintive cry! which up the hill  
 Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

## IV.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,

“ Down to the stump of yon old yew

We’ll for our Whistles run a race.”

——Away the Shepherds flew.

They leapt—they ran—and when they came

Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,

Seeing that he should lose the prize,

“ Stop!” to his comrade Walter cries—

James stopped with no good will:

Said Walter then, “ Your task is here,

’Twill keep you working half a year.

## V.

“ Now cross where I shall cross—come on,

And follow me where I shall lead”—

The other took him at his word,

But did not like the deed.

It was a spot, which you may see

If ever you to Langdale go:

Into a chasm a mighty Block

Hath fallen, and made a Bridge of rock:

The gulph is deep below;

And in a bason black and small

Receives a lofty Waterfall.

## VI.

With staff in hand across the cleft  
 The Challenger began his march;  
 And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained  
 The middle of the arch.

When list! he hears a piteous moan—  
 Again!—his heart within him dies—  
 His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,  
 He totters, pale as any ghost,  
 And, looking down, he spies  
 A Lamb, that in the pool is pent  
 Within that black and frightful Rent,

## VII.

The Lamb had slipped into the stream,  
 And safe without a bruise or wound  
 The Cataract had borne him down  
 Into the gulph profound.  
 His Dam had seen him when he fell,  
 She saw him down the torrent borne;  
 And, while with all a mother's love  
 She from the lofty rocks above  
 Sent forth a cry forlorn,  
 The Lamb, still swimming round and round,  
 Made answer to that plaintive sound.



## VIII.

When he had learnt what thing it was,  
 That sent this rueful cry; I ween,  
 The Boy recovered heart, and told  
 The sight which he had seen.  
 Both gladly now deferred their task;  
 Nor was there wanting other aid—  
 A Poet, one who loves the brooks  
 Far better than the sages' books,  
 By chance had thither strayed;  
 And there the helpless Lamb he found  
 By those huge rocks encompassed round.

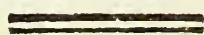
## IX.

He drew it gently from the pool,  
 And brought it forth into the light:  
 The Shepherds met him with his Charge,  
 An unexpected sight!  
 Into their arms the Lamb they took,  
 Said they, "He's neither maimed nor scarred."  
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,  
 And placed him at his Mother's side;  
 And gently did the Bard  
 Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,  
 And bade them better mind their trade.

## XIV.

*To H. C.,*

SIX YEARS OLD.



O THOU! whose fancies from afar are brought;  
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,  
And fittest to unutterable thought  
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;  
Thou faery Voyager! that dost float  
In such clear water, that thy Boat  
May rather seem  
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;  
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery;  
O blessed Vision! happy Child!  
That art so exquisitely wild,  
I think of thee with many fears  
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,  
Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
And Grief, uneasy Lover! never rest  
But when she sate within the touch of thee.  
Oh! too industrious folly!  
Oh! vain and causeless melancholy!  
Nature will either end thee quite;  
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
A young Lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.  
What hast Thou to do with sorrow,  
Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
Thou art a Dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,  
Not framed to undergo unkindly shocks;  
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
A gem that glitters while it lives,  
And no forewarning gives;  
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife  
Slips in a moment out of life.



## XV.

*INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS*

*In calling forth and strengthening the Imagination in Boyhood and  
early Youth ;*

*From an unpublished Poem.*

(This Extract is reprinted from "THE FRIEND.")

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WISDOM and Spirit of the Universe!  
 Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought!  
 And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
 And everlasting motion! not in vain,  
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn  
 Of childhood didst thou interwine for me  
 The passions that build up our human soul ;  
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man,—  
 But with high objects, with enduring things,  
 With life and nature ; purifying thus

The elements of feeling and of thought,  
 And sanctifying by such discipline  
 Both pain and fear,—until we recognise  
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me  
 With stinted kindness. In November days  
 When vapours, rolling down the vallies, made  
 A lonely scene more lonesome; among woods  
 At noon; and mid the calm of summer nights,  
 When, by the margin of the trembling Lake,  
 Beneath the gloomy hills, I homeward went  
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine :  
 'Twas mine among the fields both day and night,  
 And by the waters all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun  
 Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
 The cottage windows through the twilight blazed,  
 I heeded not the summons:—happy time  
 It was indeed for all of us; for me  
 It was a time of rapture!—Clear and loud  
 The village clock tolled six—I wheeled about,  
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse

That cares not for its home.—All shod with steel  
 We hissed along the polished ice, in games  
 Confederate, imitative of the Chase  
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,  
 The Pack loud-bellowing, and the hunted hare.  
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,  
 And not a voice was idle: with the din  
 Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud;  
 The leafless trees and every icy crag  
 Tinkled like iron; while the distant hills  
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
 Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars,  
 Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west  
 The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
 Into a silent bay,—or sportively  
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,  
 To cut across the image of a Star  
 That gleamed upon the ice: and oftentimes,  
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
 And all the shadowy banks on either side  
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still  
 The rapid line of motion, then at once



Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled  
With visible motion her diurnal round!  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched  
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

## XVI.

*THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.*

(A Tale told by the Fire-side.)

---

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,  
We've romp'd enough, my little Boy!  
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,  
And you shall bring your stool and rest,  
This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see  
That you can listen quietly;  
And, as I promised, I will tell  
That strange adventure which befel  
A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy!—why call him so?  
Because, my Darlings, ye must know,  
In land where many a mountain towers,  
Far higher hills than these of ours!  
He from his birth had liv'd.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight;  
 The sun, the day; the stars, the night;  
 Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,  
 Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,  
     Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,  
 Nor had a melancholy mind;  
 For God took pity on the Boy,  
 And was his friend; and gave him joy  
     Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above  
 Her other Children him did love:  
 For, was she here, or was she there,  
 She thought of him with constant care,  
     And more than Mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad  
 In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,  
 And bonnet with a feather gay,  
 To Kirk he on the sabbath day  
     Went hand in hand with her.



A Dog, too, had he ; not for need,  
But one to play with and to feed ;  
Which would have led him, if bereft  
Of company or friends, and left  
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow ;  
And thus from house to house would go,  
And all were pleased to hear and see ;  
For none made sweeter melody  
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;  
Both when he heard the Eagles scream,  
And when he heard the torrents roar,  
And heard the water beat the shore  
Near which their Cottage stood.

Beside a lake their Cottage stood,  
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;  
But one of mighty size, and strange ;  
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,  
And stirring in its bed.

For to this Lake, by night and day,  
 The great Sea-water finds its way  
 Through long, long windings of the hills;  
 And drinks up all the pretty rills  
     And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—  
 Returns, on errand still the same;  
 This did it when the earth was new;  
 And this for evermore will do,  
     As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the Tide,  
 Come Boats and Ships, that sweetly ride,  
 Between the woods and lofty rocks;  
 And to the Shepherds with their flocks  
     Bring tales of distant Lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,  
 The blind Boy always had his share;  
 Whether of mighty Towns, or Vales  
 With warmer suns and softer gales,  
     Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirr'd,  
 When from the water-side he heard  
 The shouting, and the jolly cheers,  
 The bustle of the mariners  
     In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail?  
 For He must never handle sail;  
 Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float  
 In Sailor's ship or Fisher's boat  
     Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,  
 What sin would be upon her head  
 If she should suffer this: "My Son,  
 Whate'er you do, leave this undone;  
     The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Levin's side  
 Still sounding with the sounding tide,  
 And heard the billows leap and dance,  
 Without a shadow of mischance,  
     Till he was ten years old.



When one day (and now mark me well,  
 Ye soon shall know how this befel)  
 He's in a vessel of his own,  
 On the swift water hurrying down  
     Towards the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more  
 May human Creature leave the shore :  
 If this or that way he should stir,  
 Woe to the poor blind Mariner !  
     For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen  
 The Indian's Bow, his arrows keen,  
 Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright ;  
 Gifts which, for wonder or delight,  
     Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those sea-faring men  
 Spread round that Haven in the glen ;  
 Each hut, perchance, might have its own,  
 And to the Boy they all were known,  
     He knew and prized them all.

And one, the rarest, was a Shell  
 Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;  
 The Shell of a green Turtle, thin  
 And hollow ;—you might sit therein,  
     It was so wide and deep.

'Twas even the largest of its kind,  
 Large, thin, and light as birch-tree rind ;  
 So light a Shell that it would swim,  
 And gaily lift its fearless brim  
     Above the tossing waves.

And this the little blind Boy knew :  
 And he a story strange, yet true,  
 Had heard, how in a Shell like this  
 An English Boy, O thought of bliss!  
     Had stoutly launched from shore ;

Launched from the margin of a bay  
 Among the Indian Isles, where lay  
 His Father's ship, and had sailed far,  
 To join that gallant Ship of war,  
     In his delightful Shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited  
 The house which held this prize; and, led  
 By choice or chance, did thither come  
 One day when no one was at home,  
     And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,  
 That Story flashed upon his mind;—  
 A bold thought roused him, and he took  
 The Shell from out its secret nook,  
     And bore it in his arms.

And with the happy burthen hied,  
 And pushed it from Loch Levin's side,—  
 Stepped into it; and, without dread,  
 Following the fancies in his head,  
     He paddled up and down.

A while he stood upon his feet;  
 He felt the motion—took his seat;  
 And dallied thus, till from the shore  
 The tide retreating more and more  
     Had sucked, and sucked him in.



And there he is in face of Heaven.  
 How rapidly the Child is driven!  
 The fourth part of a mile I ween  
 He thus had gone, ere he was seen  
     By any numan eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me  
 What shrieking and what misery!  
 For many saw; among the rest  
 His Mother, she who loved him best,  
     She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the Child, the sightless Boy,  
 It is the triumph of his joy!  
 The bravest Traveller in balloon,  
 Mounting as if to reach the moon,  
     Was never half so bless'd.

And let him, let him go his way,  
 Alone, and innocent, and gay!  
 For, if good Angels love to wait  
 On the forlorn unfortunate,  
     This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,  
 Which from the crowd on shore was sent,  
 The cries which broke from old and young  
 In Gaelic, or the English tongue,  
     Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew  
 A Boat is ready to pursue ;  
 And from the shore their course they take,  
 And swiftly down the running Lake  
     They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace,  
 So have ye seen the fowler chase  
 On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast  
 A Youngling of the wild-duck's nest  
     With deftly-lifted oar.

Or as the wily Sailors crept  
 To seize (while on the Deep it slept)  
 The hapless Creature which did dwell  
 Erewhile within the dancing Shell,  
     They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made  
 They follow, more and more afraid,  
 More cautious as they draw more near;  
 But in his darkness he can hear,  
     And guesses their intent.

“ *Lei-gha—Lei-gha*”—then did he cry  
 “ *Lei-gha—Lei-gha*”—most eagerly;  
 Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,  
 And what he meant was, “ Keep away,  
     And leave me to myself !”

Alas ! and when he felt their hands——  
 You’ve often heard of magic Wands,  
 That with a motion overthrow  
 A palace of the proudest shew,  
     Or melt it into air.

So all his dreams, that inward light  
 With which his soul had shone so bright,  
 All vanish’d ;—’twas a heartfelt cross  
 To him, a heavy, bitter loss,  
     As he had ever known.



But hark ! a gratulating voice  
 With which the very hills rejoice :  
 'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly  
 Had watch'd the event, and now can see  
     That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,  
 Full sure they were a happy band,  
 Which gathering round did on the banks  
 Of that great Water give God thanks,  
     And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart  
 The blind Boy's little Dog took part ;  
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss  
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,  
     With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,  
 She who had fainted with her fear,  
 Rejoiced when waking she espies  
 The Child ; when she can trust her eyes,  
     And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,  
 When he was in the house again :  
 Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;  
 She could not blame him, or chastise:  
     She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved  
 The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;  
 And, though his fancies had been wild,  
 Yet he was pleased, and reconciled  
     To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland Dell  
 Still do they keep the Turtle shell ;  
 And long the Story will repeat  
 Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,  
     And how he was preserved.\*

\* See note at the end of this Volume.

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JUVENILE PIECES.

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I.

*EXTRACT*

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM,

*Composed upon leaving School.*

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DEAR native Regions, I foretell  
From what I feel at this farewell,  
That, wheresoe'er my steps shall tend,  
And whensoe'er my course shall end,  
If in that hour a single tie  
Survive of local sympathy,  
My soul will cast the backward view,  
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, when the Sun, prepared for rest,  
Hath gained the precincts of the West,  
Though his departing radiance fail  
To illuminate the hollow Vale,  
A lingering light he fondly throws  
On the dear Hills where first he rose.

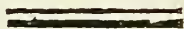
## II.

*EXTRACTS*

FROM A POEM ENTITLED

AN EVENING WALK;

Published in 1793.



BRIGHT'NING the cliffs between, where sombrous pine  
 And yew-trees o'er the silver rocks recline;  
 I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,  
 Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and numerous wains;  
 How busy the enormous hive within,  
 While Echo dallies with the various din!  
 Some (hardly heard their chisel's clinking sound)  
 Toil, small as pignies, in the gulf profound;  
 Some, dim between th' aëreal cliffs descry'd,  
 O'erwalk the slender plank from side to side;  
 These, by the pale-blue rocks that ceaseless ring,  
 Glad from their airy baskets hang and sing.



\* \* \* \* \*

Now, while the solemn evening Shadows sail  
 On red slow-waving pinions down the vale,  
 How pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray,  
 Where winds the road along a secret bay ;  
 By rills that tumble down the woody steeps,  
 And run in transport to the dimpling deeps ;  
 Along the “ wild meandering shore ” to view,  
 Obsequious Grace the winding swan pursue.  
 He swells his lifted chest, and backward flings  
 His bridling neck between his towering wings ;  
 In all the majesty of ease divides,  
 And glorying looks around, the silent tides :  
 On as he floats, the silvered waters glow,  
 Proud of the varying arch and moveless form of snow.  
 While tender Cares and mild domestic Loves  
 With furtive watch pursue her as she moves ;  
 The Female with a meeker charm succeeds,  
 And her brown Little-ones around her leads,  
 Nibbling the water-lilies as they pass,  
 Or playing wanton with the floating grass.

She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride  
 Forgets, unweary'd watching every side :  
 She calls them near, and with affection sweet  
 Alternately relieves their weary feet ;  
 Alternately they mount her back, and rest,  
 Close by her mantling wings' embraces prest.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now with religious awe the farewel light  
 Blends with the solemn colouring of the night ;  
 Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,  
 And round the West's proud lodge their shadows throw,  
 Like Una shining on her gloomy way,  
 The half-seen form of Twilight roams astray ;  
 Shedding, through paly loopholes mild and small,  
 Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom fall,  
 Beyond the mountain's giant reach that hides  
 In deep determined gloom his subject tides.  
 Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale  
 Tracking the fitful motions of the gale.  
 With restless interchange at once the bright  
 Wins on the shade, the shade upon the light.  
 No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze  
 On lovelier spectacle in faery days ;

When gentle Spirits urged a sportive chace,  
 Brushing with lucid wands the water's face ;  
 While music, stealing round the glimmering deeps,  
 Charmed the tall circle of th' enchanted steeps.  
 —The lights are vanished from the watry plains :  
 No wreck of all the pageantry remains.  
 Unheeded Night has overcome the vales :  
 On the dark earth the baffled vision fails ;  
 The latest lingerer of the forest train,  
 The lone black fir, forsakes the faded plain ;  
 Last evening sight, the cottage smoke no more,  
 Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers hoar ;  
 And, towering from the sullen dark-brown mere,  
 Like a black wall, the mountain steeps appear.  
 —Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel  
 A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,  
 And ever, as we fondly muse, we find  
 The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.  
 Stay ! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay !  
 Ah no ! as fades the vale, they fade away.  
 Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains ;  
 Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light, to thread  
 Silent the hedge or steaming rivulet's bed,



From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon  
 Salute with boding note the rising moon,  
 Frosting with hoary light the pearly ground,  
 And pouring deeper blue to Æther's bound ;  
 And pleased her solemn pomp of clouds to fold  
 In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

See, o'er the eastern hill, where Darkness broods  
 O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and woods ;  
 Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,  
 She lifts in silence up her lovely face ;  
 Above the gloomy valley flings her light,  
 Far to the western slopes with hamlets white ;  
 And gives, where woods the chequered upland strew,  
 To the green corn of summer autumn's hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn  
 Her dawn, far lovelier than the Moon's own morn ;  
 'Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer  
 The weary hills, impervious, blackening near ;  
 —Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while  
 On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

—Ev'n now she decks for me a distant scene,  
 (For dark and broad the gulph of time between)  
 Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,  
 (Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way ;

How fair it's lawns and sheltering woods appear !  
How sweet it's streamlet murmurs in mine ear !)  
Where we, my friend, to happy days shall rise,  
'Till our small share of hardly-paining sighs  
(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)  
Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of Death.

## III.

*EXTRACTS*

FROM

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN  
TOUR IN THE ALPS.

(Published in 1793.)

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PLEASURES OF THE PEDESTRIAN.

No sad vacuities his heart annoy ;—  
Blows not a Zephyr but it whispers joy ;  
For him lost flowers their idle sweets exhale ;  
He tastes the meanest note that swells the gale ;  
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn,  
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening bourn !  
Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,  
And dear the green-sward to his velvet tread ;  
Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye ?  
Upward he looks—"and calls it luxury ;"  
Kind Nature's charities his steps attend,  
In every babbling brook he finds a friend,  
While chast'ning thoughts of sweetest use, bestowed  
By Wisdom, moralize his pensive road.  
Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide bower,  
To his spare meal he calls the passing poor ;



He views the Sun uplift his golden fire,  
 Or sink, with heart alive like \* Memnon's lyre;  
 Blesses the Moon that comes with kindest ray  
 To light him shaken by his viewless way.  
 With bashful fear no cottage children steal  
 From him, a brother at the cottage meal,  
 His humble looks no shy restraint impart,  
 Around him plays at will the virgin heart.  
 While unsuspended wheels the village dance,  
 The maidens eye him with inquiring glance,  
 Much wondering what sad stroke of crazing Care  
 Or desperate Love could lead a wanderer there.

\* \* \* \* \*

I SIGH at hoary Chartreuse' doom.

Where now is fled that Power whose frown severe  
 Tamed "sober Reason" till she crouched in fear?  
 That breathed a death-like peace these woods around;  
 — — — — —  
 The cloister startles at the gleam of arms,  
 And Blasphemy the shuddering fane alarms;

\* The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

Nod the cloud-piercing pines their troubled heads,  
 Spires, rocks, and lawns, a browner night o'erspreads.  
 Strong terror checks the female peasant's sighs,  
 And start the astonished shades at female eyes.  
 The thundering tube the aged angler hears,  
 And swells the groaning torrent with his tears.  
 From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted jay,  
 And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.  
 The cross with hideous laughter Demons mock,  
 By \* angels planted on the aerial rock.  
 The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow breath  
 Along the mystic streams of † Life and Death.  
 Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds  
 Portentous, through her old woods' trackless bounds,  
 ‡ Vallombre, mid her falling fanes, deplores,  
 For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden margin roves  
 Of Como bosomed deep in chesnut groves.  
 No meadows thrown between, the giddy steeps  
 Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow deeps.

\* Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks of the Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible.

† Names of Rivers at the Chartreuse.

‡ Name of one of the vallics of the Chartreuse.



To towns, whose shades of no rude sound complain,  
 To ringing team unknown and grating wain,  
 To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's bound,  
 Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,  
 Or from the bending rocks obtrusive cling,  
 And o'er the whitened wave their shadows fling;  
 Wild round the steeps the little pathway twines,  
 And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.  
 The viewless lingerer hence, at evening, sees  
 From rock-hewn steps the sail between the trees;  
 Or marks, mid opening cliffs, fair dark-eyed maids  
 Tend the small harvest of their garden glades,  
 Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to view  
 Stretch, o'er the pictured mirror, broad and blue,  
 Tracking the yellow sun from steep to steep,  
 As up the opposing hills, with tortoise foot, they creep.  
 Here half a village shines, in gold arrayed,  
 Bright as the moon; half hides itself in shade.  
 From the dark sylvan roofs the restless spire  
 Inconstant glancing, mounts like springing fire.  
 There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw  
 Rich golden verdure on the waves below.  
 Slow glides the sail along th' illumined shore,  
 And steals into the shade the lazy oar.



Soft bosoms breathe around contagious sighs,  
And amorous music on the water dies.

How bless'd, delicious scene! the eye that greets  
Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats;  
Th' unwearied sweep of wood thy cliffs that scales;  
The never-ending waters of thy vales;  
The cots, those dim religious groves embower,  
Or, under rocks that from the water tower  
Insinuated, sprinkling all the shore,  
Each with his household boat beside the door,  
Whose flaccid sails in forms fantastic droop,  
Bright'ning the gloom where thick the forests stoop;  
——Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue sky,  
Thy towns, like swallows' nests that cleave on high;  
That glimmer hoar in eve's last light, descry'd  
Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,  
Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted woods  
Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods,  
While Evening's solemn bird melodious weeps,  
Heard, by star-spotted bays, beneath the steeps;  
——Thy lake, mid smoking woods, that blue and grey  
Gleams, streaked or dappled, hid from morning's ray  
Slow travelling down the western hills, to fold  
Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold;

From thickly-glittering spires the matin bell  
 Calling the woodman from his desert cell,  
 A summons to the sound of oars, that pass,  
 Spotting the steaming deeps, to early mass ;  
 Slow swells the service o'er the water born,  
 While fill each pause the ringing woods of morn.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, passing Urseren's open vale serene,  
 Her quiet streams, and hills of downy green,  
 Plunge with the Russ embrowned by Terror's breath,  
 Where danger roofs the narrow walks of death ;  
 By floods, that, thundering from their dizzy height,  
 Swell more gigantic on the stedfast sight ;  
 Black drizzling crags, that beaten by the din,  
 Vibrate, as if a voice complained within ;  
 Bare steeps, where Desolation stalks afraid,  
 Unstedfast, by a blasted yew upstayed ;  
 By \* cells whose image, trembling as he prays,  
 Awe-struck, the kneeling peasant scarce surveys ;

\* The Catholic religion prevails here : these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like Roman tombs, along the road side.

Loose hanging rocks the Day's bless'd eye that hide,  
 And \* crosses reared to Death on every side,  
 Which with cold kiss Devotion planted near,  
 And bending water'd with the human tear ;  
 That faded " silent" from her upward eye,  
 Unmoved with each rude form of Danger nigh,  
 Fixed on the anchor left by him who saves  
 Alike in whelming snows and roaring waves.

On as we move a softer prospect opes,  
 Calm huts, and lawns between, and sylvan slopes.  
 While mists, suspended on the expiring gale,  
 Moveless o'er-hang the deep secluded vale,  
 The beams of evening, slipping soft between,  
 Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene.  
 Winding its dark-green wood and emerald glade,  
 The still vale lengthens underneath the shade ;  
 While in soft gloom the scattering bowers recede,  
 Green dewy lights adorn the freshened mead,  
 On the low † brown wood-huts delighted sleep  
 Along the brightened gloom reposing deep.

\* Crosses commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow and other accidents, very common along this dreadful road.

† The houses in the more retired Swiss vallies are all built of wood.



While pastoral pipes and streams the landscape lull,  
 And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,  
 In solemn shapes before the admiring eye  
 Dilated hang the misty pines on high,  
 Huge convent domes with pinnacles and towers,  
 And antique castles seen through drizzling showers.

From such romantic dreams my soul awake,  
 Lo! Fear looks silent down on Uri's lake;  
 Where by the unpathwayed margin still and dread  
 Was never heard the plodding peasant's tread:  
 Tower like a wall the naked rocks, or reach  
 Far o'er the secret water dark with beach;  
 More high, to where creation seems to end,  
 Shade above shade the desert pines ascend.  
 Yet, with his infants, man undaunted creeps  
 And hangs his small wood-hut upon the steeps,  
 Where'er, below, amid the savage scene  
 Peeps out a little speck of smiling green.  
 A garden-plot the mountain air perfumes,  
 Mid the dark pines a little orchard blooms;  
 A zig-zag path from the domestic skiff,  
 Threading the painful crag, surmounts the cliff.

—Before those hermit doors, that never know  
 The face of traveller passing to and fro,  
 No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell  
 For whom at morning tolled the funeral bell ;  
 Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark foregoes,  
 Touched by the beggar's moan of human woes ;  
 The grassy seat beneath their casement shade  
 The pilgrim's wistful eye hath never stayed.  
 —There, did the iron Genius not disdain  
 The gentle Power that haunts the myrtle plain,  
 There might the love-sick Maiden sit, and chide  
 Th' insuperable rocks and severing tide,  
 There watch at eve her Lover's sun-gilt sail  
 Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale,  
 There list at midnight, till is heard no more,  
 Below, the echo of his parting oar,  
 There hang in fear, when growls the frozen stream,  
 To guide his dangerous tread, the taper's gleam.

Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,  
 Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry ;  
 Where hardly given the hopeless waste to cheer,  
 Denied the bread of life the foodful ear,

Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,  
 And apple sickens pale in summer's ray ;  
 Ev'n here Content has fixed her smiling reign  
 With Independence, child of high Disdain.  
 Exulting mid the winter of the skies,  
 Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,  
 And often grasps her sword, and often eyes :  
 Her crest a bough of Winter's bleakest pine,  
 Strange " weeds" and alpine plants her helm entwine,  
 And wildly-pausing oft she hangs aghast,  
 While thrills the " Spartan fife" between the blast.

\* \* \* \* \*

'Tis storm ; and, hid in mist from hour to hour,  
 All day the floods a deepening murmur pour ;  
 The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight :  
 Dark is the region as with coming night ;  
 But what a sudden burst of overpowering light !  
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
 Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form ;  
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine  
 The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline ;  
 Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,  
 At once to pillars turned that flame with gold ;



Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun  
 The west that burns like one dilated sun,  
 Where in a mighty crucible expire  
 The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire.

\* \* \* \* \*

—AND sure there is a secret Power that reigns  
 Here, where no trace of man the spot profanes,  
 Nought\* but the herds that pasturing upward creep,  
 Hung dim-discover'd from the dangerous steep,  
 Or summer hamlet, flat and bare, on high  
 Suspended, mid the quiet of the sky.  
 How still! no irreligious sound or sight  
 Rouzes the soul from her severe delight.  
 An idle voice the sabbath region fills  
 Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,  
 Broke only by the melancholy sound  
 Of drowsy bells for ever tinkling round;  
 Faint wail of eagle melting into blue  
 Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods steady *sugh* †;

\* This picture is from the middle region of the Alps.

† *Sugh*, a scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

The solitary heifer's deepen'd low ;  
 Or rumbling heard remote of falling snow ;  
 Save that, the stranger seen below, the boy  
 Shouts from the echoing hills with savage joy.

\* \* \* \* \*

WHEN warm from myrtle bays and tranquil seas,  
 Comes on, to whisper hope, the vernal breeze,  
 When hums the mountain bee in May's glad ear,  
 And emerald isles to spot the heights appear,  
 When shouts and lowing herds the valley fill,  
 And louder torrents stun the noon-tide hill,  
 When fragrant scents beneath th' enchanted tread  
 Spring up, his choicest wealth around him spread,  
 The pastoral Swiss begins the cliffs to scale,  
 To silence leaving the deserted vale,  
 Mounts, where the verdure leads, from stage to stage,  
 And pastures on, as in the Patriarch's age :  
 O'er lofty heights serene and still they go,  
 And hear the rattling thunder far below.  
 They cross the chasmy torrent's foam-lit bed,  
 Rocked on the dizzy larch's narrow tread ;  
 Or steal beneath loose mountains, half deterr'd,  
 That sigh and shudder to the lowing herd.

--I see him, up the midway cliff he creeps  
 To where a scanty knot of verdure peeps,  
 Thence down the steep a pile of grass he throws,  
 The fodder of his herds in winter snows.  
 Far different life to what tradition hoar  
 Transmits of days more blest in times of yore ;  
 Then Summer lengthened out his season bland,  
 And with rock-honey flowed the happy land.  
 Continual fountains welling cheered the waste,  
 And plants were wholesome, now of deadly taste.  
 Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled  
 Usurpign where the fairest herbage smiled ;  
 Nor Hunger forced the herds from pastures bare  
 For scanty food the treacherous cliffs to dare.  
 Then the milk-thistle bade those herds demand  
 Three mites a day the pail and welcome hand.  
 But human vices have provoked the rod  
 Of angry Nature to avenge her God.  
 Thus does the father to his sons relate,  
 On the lone mountain top, their changed estate.  
 Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts  
 Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.  
 When downward to his winter hut he goes,  
 Dear and more dear the lessening circle grows,



That hut which from the hills his eyes employs  
 So oft, the central point of all his joys,  
 Where safely guarded by the woods behind  
 He hears the chiding of the baffled wind;  
 Hears Winter, calling all his Terrors round,  
 Rush down the living rocks with whirlwind sound.  
 Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures glide  
 Unstained by envy, discontent, and pride;  
 The bound of all his vanity to deck  
 With one bright bell a favourite heifer's neck:  
 Content, upon some simple annual feast,  
 (Remembered half the year, and hoped the rest,)  
 If dairy produce, from his inner hoard,  
 Of thrice ten summers consecrate the board.

\* \* \* \* \*

GAY lark of hope thy silent song resume!  
 Fair smiling lights the purpled hills illumine!  
 Soft gales and dews of life's delicious morn,  
 And thou, lost fragrance of the heart return!  
 Soon flies the little joy to man allowed,  
 And grief before him travels like a cloud:  
 For come Diseases on, and Penury's rage,  
 Labour, and Care, and Pain, and dismal Age,

'Till, Hope-deserted, long in vain his breath  
 Implores the dreadful untried sleep of Death.  
 —Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine  
 Between interminable tracts of pine,  
 A Temple stands ; which holds an awful shrine,  
 By an uncertain light revealed, that falls  
 On the mute Image and the troubled walls :  
 Pale, dreadful faces round the Shrine appear,  
 Abortive Joy, and Hope that works in fear ;  
 While strives a secret Power to hush the crowd,  
 Pain's wild rebellious burst proclaims her rights aloud.

Oh ! give not me that eye of hard disdain  
 That views undimmed Ensiedlen's \* wretched fane.  
 Mid muttering prayers all sounds of torment meet,  
 Dire clap of hands, distracted chafe of feet ;  
 While loud and dull ascends the weeping cry,  
 Surely in other thoughts contempt may die.  
 If the sad grave of human ignorance bear  
 One flower of hope—Oh, pass and leave it there.

\* This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes,  
 from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental  
 or bodily afflictions.

## IV.

*THE FEMALE VAGRANT.*


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*Having described her own Situation with her Husband,  
serving in America during the War, she proceeds,*

\* \* \* \* \*

ALL perished—all, in one remorseless year,  
Husband and Children! one by one, by sword  
And ravenous plague, all perished: every tear  
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board  
A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored.

Peaceful as some immeasurable plain.  
By the first beams of dawning light imprest,  
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main.  
The very ocean has its hour of rest.  
I too was calm, though heavily distress!  
Oh me, how quiet sky and ocean were!  
My heart was hushed within me, I was blest,  
And looked, and looked along the silent air,  
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my despair.



Ah ! how unlike those late terrific sleeps !  
 And groans, that rage of racking famine spoke !  
 The unburied dead that lay in festering heaps !  
 The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke !  
 The shriek that from the distant battle broke !  
 The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host  
 Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke  
 To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish toss'd,  
 Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost !

Some mighty gulf of separation past,  
 I seemed transported to another world :—  
 A thought resigned with pain, when from the mast  
 The impatient mariner the sail unfurl'd,  
 And, whistling, called the wind that hardly curled  
 The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home  
 And from all hope I was for ever hurled.  
 For me—farthest from earthly port to roam  
 Was best, could I but shun the spot where man might come.

And oft I thought (my fancy was so strong)  
 That I at last a resting-place had found ;  
 “ Here will I dwell,” said I, “ my whole life long,  
 Roaming the illimitable waters round :  
 Here will I live :—of every friend disown'd,

And end my days upon the ocean flood."—  
 To break my dream the vessel reached its bound :  
 And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,  
 And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.

By grief enfeebled was I turned adrift,  
 Helpless as sailor cast on desert rock ;  
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,  
 Nor dared my hand at any door to knock.  
 I lay where, with his drowsy Mates, the Cock  
 From the cross timber of an out-house hung ;  
 Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock !  
 At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely stung,  
 Nor to the beggar's language could I frame my tongue.

So pass'd another day, and so the third ;  
 Then did I try in vain the crowd's resort.  
 —In deep despair by frightful wishes stirr'd,  
 Near the sea-side I reached a ruined Fort :  
 There, pains which nature could no more support,  
 With blindness link'd, did on my vitals fall,  
 And I had many interruptions short  
 Of hideous sense ; I sank, nor step could crawl  
 And thence was carried to a neighbouring Hospital.



Recovery came with food : but still my brain  
 Was weak, nor of the past had memory.  
 I heard my neighbours, in their beds, complain  
 Of many things which never troubled me ;  
 Of feet still bustling round with busy glee ;  
 Of looks where common kindness had no part ;  
 Of service done with careless cruelty,  
 Fretting the fever round the languid heart ;  
 And groans, which, as they said, might make a dead man start.

These things just served to stir the torpid sense,  
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.  
 My memory and my strength returned ; and thence  
 Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,  
 At houses, men, and common light, amazed.  
 The lanes I sought, and, as the sun retired,  
 Came where beneath the trees a faggot blazed ;  
 The Travellers saw me weep, my fate inquired,  
 And gave me food,---and rest, more welcome, more desired.

They with their pannier'd Asses semblance made  
 Of Potters wandering on from door to door :  
 But life of happier sort to me portrayed,  
 And other joys my fancy to allure ;



The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor  
 In barn uplighted, and Companions boon  
 Well met from far with revelry secure,  
 Among the forest glades, when jocund June  
 Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

But ill they suited me ; those journeys dark  
 O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch !  
 To charm the surly House-dog's faithful bark,  
 Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.  
 The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,  
 The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill,  
 And ear still busy on its nightly watch,  
 Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill :  
 Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding still.

What could I do, unaided and unblest ?  
 My Father ! gone was every friend of thine :  
 And kindred of dead husband are at best  
 Small help ; and, after marriage such as mine,  
 With little kindness would to me incline.  
 Ill was I then for toil or service fit :  
 With tears whose course no effort could confine,  
 By the road-side forgetful would I sit  
 Whole hours, my idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

I led a wandering life among the fields ;  
 Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,  
 I lived upon what casual bounty yields,  
 Now coldly given, now utterly refused.  
 The ground I for my bed have often used :  
 But, what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth  
 Is, that I have my inner self abused,  
 Forgone the home delight of constant truth,  
 And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

Three years thus wandering, often have I view'd,  
 In tears, the sun towards that country tend  
 Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :  
 And now across this moor my steps I bend—  
 Oh ! tell me whither——for no earthly friend  
 Have I.”——She ceased, and weeping turned away,  
 As if because her tale was at an end  
 She wept;—because she had no more to say  
 Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay.

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# POEMS

FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS.

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I.

*THE BROTHERS* \*.

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“ **T**HESE Tourists, Heaven preserve us! needs must live  
A profitable life: some glance along,  
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,  
And they were butterflies to wheel about  
Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,  
Upon the forehead of a jutting crag  
Sit perched, with book and pencil on their knee,  
And look and scribble, scribble on and look,  
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,  
Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.

\* This Poem was intended to conclude a series of pastorals, the scene of which was laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. I mention this to apologize for the abruptness with which the poem begins.

But, for that moping Son of Idleness,  
 Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-yard  
 Is neither epitaph nor monument,  
 Tomb-stone nor name—only the turf we tread,  
 And a few natural graves.” To Jane, his wife,  
 Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.

It was a July evening ; and he sate  
 Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves  
 Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,  
 Employed in winter’s work. Upon the stone  
 His Wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,  
 While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,  
 He fed the spindle of his youngest Child,  
 Who turned her large round wheel in the open air  
 With back and forward steps. Towards the field  
 In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,  
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,  
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent  
 Many a long look of wonder ; and at last,  
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge  
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled  
 He laid his implements with gentle care,  
 Each in the other locked ; and, down the path  
 Which from his cottage to the church-yard led,



He took his way, impatient to accost  
The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,  
A Shepherd-lad;—who ere his sixteenth year  
Had left that calling, tempted to entrust  
His expectations to the fickle winds  
And perilous waters,—with the mariners  
A fellow-mariner,—and so had fared  
Through twenty seasons; but he had been reared  
Among the mountains, and he in his heart  
Was half a Shepherd on the stormy seas.  
Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard  
The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds  
Of caves and trees :—and, when the regular wind  
Between the tropics filled the steady sail,  
And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,  
Lengthening invisibly its weary line  
Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours  
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang  
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze;  
And, while the broad green wave and sparkling foam  
Flashed round him images and hues that wrought  
In union with the employment of his heart,

He, thus by feverish passion overcome,  
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,  
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,  
 Saw mountains,—saw the forms of sheep that grazed  
 On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,  
 And shepherds clad in the same country gray  
 Which he himself had worn \*.

And now at last

From perils manifold, with some small wealth  
 Acquired by traffic in the Indian Isles,  
 To his paternal home he is returned,  
 With a determined purpose to resume  
 The life which he lived there; both for the sake  
 Of many darling pleasures, and the love  
 Which to an only brother he has borne  
 In all his hardships, since that happy time  
 When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two  
 Were brother Shepherds on their native hills.  
 —They were the last of all their race: and now  
 When Leonard had approached his home, his heart

\* This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of *The Hurricane*.



Failed in him ; and, not venturing to inquire  
 Tidings of one whom he so dearly loved,  
 Towards the church-yard he had turned aside,—  
 That, as he knew in what particular spot  
 His family were laid, he thence might learn  
 If still his Brother lived, or to the file  
 Another grave was added.—He had found  
 Another grave,—near which a full half-hour  
 He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there grew  
 Such a confusion in his memory,  
 That he began to doubt ; and he had hopes  
 That he had seen this heap of turf before,—  
 That it was not another grave, but one  
 He had forgotten. He had lost his path,  
 As up the vale that afternoon he walked  
 Through fields which once had been well known to him :  
 And oh ! what joy the recollection now  
 Sent to his heart ! He lifted up his eyes,  
 And looking round imagined that he saw  
 Strange alteration wrought on every side  
 Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,  
 And the eternal hills, themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come  
 Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate



Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb  
 Perused him with a gay complacency.  
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,  
 'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path  
 Of the world's business to go wild alone :  
 His arms have a perpetual holiday ;  
 The happy Man will creep about the fields  
 Following his fancies by the hour, to bring  
 Tears down his cheeks, or solitary smiles  
 Into his face, until the setting sun  
 Write Fool upon his forehead. Planted thus  
 Beneath a shed that overarched the gate  
 Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared  
 The good man might have communed with himself,  
 But that the stranger, who had left the grave,  
 Approached ; he recognized the Priest at once,  
 And, after greetings interchanged, and given  
 By Leonard to the Vicar as to one  
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

**LEONARD.**

You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life :  
 Your years make up one peaceful family ;  
 And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come  
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,  
 They cannot be remembered ? Scarce a funeral

Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months ;  
 And yet, some changes must take place among you :  
 And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks  
 Can trace the finger of mortality,  
 And see, that with our threescore years and ten  
 We are not all that perish.—I remember,  
 For many years ago I passed this road,  
 There was a foot-way all along the fields  
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !  
 To me it does not seem to wear the face  
 Which then it had.

PRIEST.

Nay, Sir, for aught I know,  
 That chasm is much the same—

LEONARD.

But, surely, yonder—

PRIEST.

Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend  
 That does not play you false—On that tall pike  
 (It is the loneliest place of all these hills)  
 There were two Springs which bubbled side by side,  
 As if they had been made that they might be  
 Companions for each other: ten years back,  
 Close to those brother fountains, the huge crag

Was rent with lightning—one is dead and gone,  
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.\*——  
 For accidents and changes such as these,  
 We want not store of them!—a water-spout  
 Will bring down half a mountain; what a feast  
 For folks that wander up and down like you  
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff  
 One roaring cataract!—a sharp May-storm  
 Will come with loads of January snow,  
 And in one night send twenty score of sheep  
 To feed the ravens; or a Shepherd dies  
 By some untoward death among the rocks :  
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge—  
 A wood is felled :—and then for our own homes !  
 A Child is born or christened, a Field ploughed,  
 A Daughter sent to service, a Web spun,  
 The old House-clock is decked with a new face ;  
 And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates  
 To chronicle the time, we all have here  
 A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,  
 For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—

\* This actually took place upon Kidstow Pike at the head of Hawe's-water.



Yours was a stranger's judgment : for Historians,  
Commend me to these valleys !

LEONARD.

Yet your Church-yard  
Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,  
To say that you are heedless of the past.  
An orphan could not find his mother's grave :  
Here's neither head- nor foot-stone, plate of brass,  
Cross-bones or skull,—type of our earthly state  
Or emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home  
Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

PRIEST.

Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new to me !  
The Stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread  
If every English Church-yard were like ours ;  
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :  
We have no need of names and epitaphs ;  
We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.  
And then, for our immortal part ! we want  
No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :  
The thought of death sits easy on the man  
Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

LEONARD.

Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts  
Possess a kind of second life : no doubt

You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these Graves?

PRIEST.

For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,  
Perhaps I might; and, on a winter's evening,  
If you were seated at my chimney's nook,  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round;  
Yet all in the broad high-way of the world.  
Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—  
It looks just like the rest; and yet that Man  
Died broken-hearted.

LEONARD.

'Tis a common case.

We'll take another: who is he that lies  
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves?  
It touches on that piece of native rock  
Left in the church-yard wall.

PRIEST.

That's Walter Ewbank.

He had as white a head and fresh a cheek  
As ever were produced by youth and age  
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.  
Through five long generations had the heart

Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds  
 Of their inheritance, that single cottage—  
 You see it yonder!—and those few green fields.  
 They toiled and wrought, and still, from Sire to Son,  
 Each struggled, and each yielded as before  
 A little—yet a little—and old Walter,  
 They left to him the family heart, and land  
 With other burthens than the crop it bore.  
 Year after year the old man still kept up  
 A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,  
 Interest, and mortgages; at last he sank,  
 And went into his grave before his time.  
 Poor Walter! whether it was care that spurred him  
 God only knows, but to the very last  
 He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale:  
 His pace was never that of an old man:  
 I almost see him tripping down the path  
 With his two Grandsons after him:—but You,  
 Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,  
 Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths  
 Even in the longest day of midsummer—

LEONARD.

But those two Orphans!

PRIEST.

Orphans!—Such they were—



Yet not while Walter lived:—for, though their parents  
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,  
 The old Man was a father to the boys,  
 Two fathers in one father: and if tears,  
 Shed when he talked of them where they were not,  
 And hauntings from the infirmity of love,  
 Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,  
 This old Man in the day of his old age  
 Was half a mother to them.—If you weep, Sir,  
 To hear a Stranger talking about Strangers,  
 Heaven bless you when you are among your kindred!  
 Ay—You may turn that way—it is a grave  
 Which will bear looking at.

LEONARD.

These Boys—I hope  
 They loved this good old Man?—

PRIEST.

They did—and truly:  
 But that was what we almost overlooked,  
 They were such darlings of each other. For  
 Though from their cradles they had lived with Walter,  
 The only Kinsman near them, and though he  
 Inclined to them, by reason of his age,  
 With a more fond, familiar tenderness,  
 They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.  
 Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,  
 Was two years taller: 'twas a joy to see,  
 To hear, to meet them!—From their house the School  
 Was distant three short miles—and in the time  
 Of storm and thaw, when every water-course  
 And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed  
 Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,  
 Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,  
 Would Leonard then, when elder boys perhaps  
 Remained at home, go staggering through the fords,  
 Bearing his Brother on his back. I've seen him,  
 On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,  
 Ay, more than once I've seen him mid-leg deep,  
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone  
 Upon the hither side: and once I said,  
 As I remember, looking round these rocks  
 And hills on which we all of us were born,  
 That God who made the great book of the world  
 Would bless such piety—

LEONARD.

It may be then—

PRIEST.

Never did worthier lads break English bread!

The finest Sunday that the Autumn saw,  
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,  
 Could never keep these boys away from church,  
 Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.  
 Leonard and James! I warrant, every corner  
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place  
 Where foot could come, to one or both of them  
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.  
 Like Roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills:  
 They played like two young Ravens on the crags:  
 Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well  
 As many of their betters—and for Leonard!  
 The very night before he went away,  
 In my own house I put into his hand  
 A Bible, and I'd wager twenty pounds,  
 That, if he is alive, he has it yet.

LEONARD.

It seems, these Brothers have not lived to be  
 A comfort to each other.—

PRIEST.

That they might  
 Live to such end, is what both old and young  
 In this our valley all of us have wished,  
 And what, for my part, I have often prayed:  
 But Leonard—



LEONARD.

Then James still is left among you?

PRIEST.

'Tis of the elder Brother I am speaking :  
 They had an Uncle ;—he was at that time  
 A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas :  
 And, but for that same Uncle, to this hour  
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud.  
 For the Boy loved the life which we lead here ;  
 And, though of unripe years, a stripling only,  
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.  
 But, as I said, old Walter was too weak  
 To strive with such a torrent ; when he died,  
 The Estate and House were sold, and all their Sheep,  
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,  
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years.  
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute.  
 And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,  
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.  
 'Tis now twelve years since we had tidings from him.  
 If there was one among us who had heard  
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,

From the great Gavel \*, down by Leeza's Banks,  
 And down the Enna, far as Egremont,  
 The day would be a very festival;  
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see  
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir!  
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him  
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him  
 He was in slavery among the Moors  
 Upon the Barbary Coast.—'Twas not a little  
 That would bring down his spirit; and, no doubt,  
 Before it ended in his death, the Youth  
 Was sadly crossed--Poor Leonard! when we parted,  
 He took me by the hand and said to me,  
 If ever the day came when he was rich,  
 He would return, and on his Father's Land  
 He would grow old among us.

\*The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the Gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale: on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

LEONARD.

If that day

Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him;  
He would himself, no doubt, be happy then  
As any that should meet him—

PRIEST.

Happy! Sir—

LEONARD.

You said his kindred all were in their graves,  
And that he had one Brother—

PRIEST.

That is but

A fellow tale of sorrow. From his youth  
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate;  
And Leonard being always by his side  
Had done so many offices about him,  
That, though he was not of a timid nature,  
Yet still the spirit of a Mountain Boy  
In him was somewhat checked; and, when his Brother  
Was gone to sea and he was left alone,  
The little colour that he had was soon  
Stolen from his cheek; he drooped, and pined, and pined—

LEONARD.

But these are all the graves of full-grown men!



## PRIEST.

Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;—  
 He was the Child of all the dale—he lived  
 Three months with one, and six months with another ;  
 And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love :  
 And many, many happy days were his.  
 But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief  
 His absent Brother still was at his heart.  
 And, when he lived beneath our roof, we found  
 (A practice till this time unknown to him)  
 That often, rising from his bed at night,  
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping  
 He sought his Brother Leonard.—You are moved !  
 Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,  
 I judged you most unkindly.

## LEONARD.

But this Youth,  
 How did he die at last ?

## PRIEST.

One sweet May morning,  
 (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)  
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,  
 With two or three Companions whom it chanced  
 Some further business summoned to a house

Which stands at the Dale-head. James, tired perhaps,  
 Or from some other cause, remained behind.  
 You see yon Precipice—it almost looks  
 Like some vast building made of many crags;  
 And in the midst is one particular rock  
 That rises like a column from the vale,  
 Whence by our shepherds it is called **THE PILLAR**.  
 James pointed to its summit, over which  
 They all had purposed to return together,  
 And told them that he there would wait for them :  
 They parted, and his Comrades passed that way  
 Some two hours after, but they did not find him  
 Upon the Summit—at the appointed place.  
 Of this they took no heed : but one of them,  
 Going by chance, at night, into the house  
 Which at that time was James's home, there learned  
 That nobody had seen him all that day :  
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of :  
 The neighbours were alarmed, and to the Brook  
 Some went, and some towards the Lake : ere noon  
 They found him at the foot of that same Rock—  
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after  
 I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

LEONARD.

And that then is his grave?—Before his death  
You said that he saw many happy years?

PRIEST.

Ay, that he did—

LEONARD.

And all went well with him—

PRIEST.

If he had one, the Youth had twenty homes.

LEONARD.

And you believe, then, that his mind was easy—

PRIEST.

Yes, long before he died, he found that time

Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless

His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune,

He talked about him with a cheerful love.

LEONARD.

He could not come to an unhallowed end!

PRIEST.

Nay, God forbid!—You recollect I mentioned

A habit which disquietude and grief

Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured

That, as the day was warm, he had lain down



Upon the grass,—and, waiting for his comrades,  
 He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep  
 He to the margin of the precipice  
 Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong.  
 And so no doubt he perished : at the time,  
 We guess, that in his hands he must have had  
 His Shepherd's staff ; for midway in the cliff  
 It had been caught ; and there for many years  
 It hung—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt  
 A gushing from his heart, that took away  
 The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;  
 And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard gate,  
 As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,—  
 And, looking at the grave, he said, “ My Brother.”  
 The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,  
 Pointing towards the Cottage, he entreated  
 That Leonard would partake his homely fare :  
 The other thanked him with a fervent voice ;  
 But added, that, the evening being calm,  
 He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove  
That overhung the road : he there stopped short,  
And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed  
All that the Priest had said : his early years  
Were with him in his heart : his cherished hopes,  
And thoughts which had been his an hour before,  
All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,  
This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed  
A place in which he could not bear to live :  
So he relinquished all his purposes.  
He travelled on to Egremont : and thence,  
That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,  
Reminding him of what had passed between them ;  
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,  
That it was from the weakness of his heart  
He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now  
A Seaman, a gray-headed Mariner.

## II.

*THE SPARROW'S NEST.*


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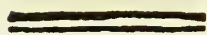
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BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
 Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
 On me the chance-discovered sight  
 Gleamed like a vision of delight.—  
 I started—seeming to espy  
 The home and sheltered bed,—  
 The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
 My Father's House, in wet or dry,  
 My Sister Emmeline and I  
     Together visited.

She looked at it as if she feared it;  
 Still wishing, dreading to be near it:  
 Such heart was in her, being then  
 A little Prattler among men.  
 The Blessing of my later years  
 Was with me when a Boy:  
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
 And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
     And love, and thought, and joy.



## III.

*TO A BUTTERFLY.*

I'VE watched you now a full half-hour,  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;  
And, little Butterfly ! indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless !—not frozen seas  
More motionless ! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again !

This plot of Orchard-ground is ours ;  
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers ;  
Here rest your wings when they are weary,  
Here lodge as in a sanctuary !  
Come often to us, fear no wrong ;  
Sit near us on the bough !  
We'll talk of sunshine and of song ;  
And summer days when we were young ;  
Sweet childish days, that were as long  
As twenty days are now.

## IV.

COMPOSED IN THE YEAR 1802.



FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,  
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair  
Of that magnificent Temple which doth bound  
One side of our whole Vale with grandeur rare ;  
Sweet Garden-orchard, eminently fair,  
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,  
Farewell !—we leave thee to heaven's peaceful care,  
Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our Boat is safely anchored by the shore,  
And safely she will ride when we are gone ;  
The flowering shrubs that decorate our door  
Will prosper, though untended and alone :  
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none ;  
These narrow bounds contain our private store  
Of things earth makes and sun doth shine upon ;  
Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell,  
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought;  
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell  
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought;  
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat  
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marygold, farewell!  
 Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,  
 And placed together near our rocky well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;  
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,  
 Our own contrivance, Building without peer,  
 A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,  
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered!  
 With joyousness and with a thoughtful cheer  
 She'll come to you,—to you herself will wed,—  
 And love the blessed life which we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with tender heed,  
 Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown  
 Among the distant mountains, flower and weed  
 Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,



Making all kindness register'd and known ;  
 'Thou for our sakes, though Nature's Child indeed,  
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,  
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,  
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost shew  
 To them who look not daily in thy face ;  
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,  
 And say'st when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"  
 Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race  
 Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,—  
 And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell her tales of years gone by,  
 And this sweet spring the best beloved and best.  
 Joy will be flown in its mortality ;  
 Something must stay to tell us of the rest.  
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast  
 Glitter'd at evening like a starry sky ;  
 And in this Bush our Sparrow built her nest,  
 Of which I sung one Song that will not die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep  
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;  
And to soft slumbers that did gently steep  
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers  
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;  
Two burning months let summer overleap,  
And, coming back with Her who will be ours,  
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

## V.

*STANZAS*

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S  
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

---

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One  
Whom without blame I may not overlook ;  
For never sun on living creature shone  
Who more devout enjoyment with us took.  
Here on his hours he hung as on a book ;  
On his own time here would he float away,  
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;  
But go to-morrow—or belike to-day—  
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home  
And find elsewhere his business or delight ;  
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :  
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,  
His voice came to us from the neighbouring height ;



Oft did we see him driving full in view  
 At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;  
 What ill was on him, what he had to do,  
 A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this man  
 When he came back to us, a withered flower,—  
 Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.  
 Down would he sit ; and without strength or power  
 Look at the common grass from hour to hour :  
 And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,  
 Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,  
 Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;  
 And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle Tribe it was  
 Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;  
 For happier soul no living creature has  
 Than he had, being here the long day through.  
 Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :  
 Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong :  
 But Verse was what he had been wedded to ;  
 And his own mind did like a tempest strong  
 Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise  
 Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree  
 A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,  
 And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly  
 As if a blooming face it ought to be;  
 Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear  
 Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;  
 Profound his forehead was, though not severe;  
 Yet some did think that he had little business here:

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right;  
 Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;  
 His limbs would toss about him with delight  
 Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.  
 Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy  
 To banish listlessness and irksome care;  
 He would have taught you how you might employ  
 Yourself; and many did to him repair,—  
 And, certes, not in vain; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried:  
 Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay,

Made—to his ear attentively applied—  
 A Pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;  
 Glasses he had, that little things display,—  
 The beetle with his radiance manifold,  
 A mailed angel on a battle day ;  
 And cups of flowers, and herbage green and gold ;  
 And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear  
 His music, and to view his imagery :  
 And, sooth, these two did love each other dear,  
 As far as love in such a place could be ;  
 There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,  
 As happy spirits as were ever seen ;  
 If but a bird, to keep them company,  
 Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,  
 As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden Queen.



## VI.

*ELLEN IRWIN,*

OR

THE BRAES OF KIRTLE.\*



FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate  
 Upon the Braes of Kirtle,  
 Was lovely as a Grecian Maid  
 Adorned with wreaths of myrtle.  
 Young Adam Bruce beside her lay;  
 And there did they beguile the day  
 With love and gentle speeches,  
 Beneath the budding beeches.

From many Knights and many Squires  
 The Bruce had been selected;  
 And Gordon, fairest of them all,  
 By Ellen was rejected.  
 Sad tidings to that noble Youth!  
 For it may be proclaimed with truth,

\* The Kirtle is a River in the Southern part of Scotland, on whose banks the events here related took place.

If Bruce hath loved sincerely,  
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what is Gordon's beauteous face?  
And what are Gordon's crosses  
To them who sit by Kirtle's Braes  
Upon the verdant mosses?  
Alas that ever he was born!  
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,  
Sees them and their caressing,  
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon cannot bear the thoughts  
That through his brain are travelling,—  
And, starting up, to Bruce's heart  
He launched a deadly javelin!  
Fair Ellen saw it when it came,  
And, stepping forth to meet the same,  
Did with her body cover  
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,  
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,  
Thus from the heart of her True-love  
The mortal spear repelling.

And Bruce, as soon as he had slain  
 The Gordon, sailed away to Spain;  
 And fought with rage incessant  
 Against the Moorish Crescent.

But many days, and many months,  
 And many years ensuing,  
 This wretched Knight did vainly seek  
 The death that he was wooing:  
 And coming back across the wave,  
 Without a groan on Ellen's grave  
 His body he extended,  
 And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard  
 The tale I have been telling,  
 May in Kirkonnel churchyard view  
 The grave of lovely Ellen:  
 By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid;  
 And, for the stone upon his head,  
 May no rude hand deface it,  
 And its forlorn HIC JACET!



## VII.



STRANGE fits of passion I have known :  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the Lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befel.

When she I loved was strong and gay,  
And like a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way,  
Beneath the evening Moon.

Upon the Moon I fixed my eye,  
All over the wide lea :  
My Horse trudged on—and we drew nigh  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard plot ;  
And, as we climbed the hill,  
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot  
The Moon descended still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
And, all the while, my eyes I kept  
On the descending Moon.

My Horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
He raised, and never stopp'd :  
When down behind the cottage roof  
At once the bright Moon dropp'd.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide  
Into a Lover's head—  
“ O mercy !” to myself I cried,  
“ If Lucy should be dead !”

## VIII.



SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none to praise,  
And very few to love.

A Violet by a mossy stone  
Half-hidden from the eye !  
—Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ;  
But she is in her Grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me !



## IX.



I TRAVELL'D among unknown Men,  
In Lands beyond the Sea ;  
Nor, England ! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time ; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire ;  
And She I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings shewed, thy nights concealed  
The bowers where Lucy played ;  
And thine is too the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

X.

*LOUISA.*

---

I MET Louisa in the shade ;  
And, having seen that lovely Maid,  
Why should I fear to say  
That she is ruddy, fleet, and strong ;  
And down the rocks can leap along,  
Like rivulets in May ?

And she hath smiles to earth unknown ;  
Smiles, that with motion of their own  
Do spread, and sink, and rise ;  
That come and go with endless play,  
And ever, as they pass away,  
Are hidden in her eyes.

She loves her fire, her Cottage-home;  
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam  
In weather rough and bleak;  
And, when against the wind she strains,  
Oh! might I kiss the mountain rains  
That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"  
If I with her but half a noon  
May sit beneath the walls  
Of some old cave, or mossy nook,  
When up she winds along the brook,  
To hunt the waterfalls.



XI.

---

'Tis said, that some have died for love :  
And here and there a church-yard grave is found  
In the cold North's unhallowed ground,—  
Because the wretched Man himself had slain,  
His love was such a grievous pain.  
And there is one whom I five years have known ;  
He dwells alone  
Upon Helvellyn's side :  
He loved——the pretty Barbara died,  
And thus he makes his moan :  
Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid  
When thus his moan he made ;

“ Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak !  
Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,  
That in some other way yon smoke  
May mount into the sky !

The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :  
 I look—the sky is empty space ;  
 I know not what I trace ;  
 But, when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

“ O ! what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves,  
 When will that dying murmur be suppress ?  
 Your sound my heart of peace bereaves,  
 It robs my heart of rest.  
 Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,  
 Into yon row of willows flit,  
 Upon that alder sit ;  
 Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

“ Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy mountain bounds,  
 And there for ever be thy waters chained !  
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds  
 That cannot be sustained ;  
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough  
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,  
 Oh let it then be dumb !—  
 Be any thing, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

“Thou Eglantine, whose arch so proudly towers,  
 (Even like a rainbow spanning half the vale)  
 Thou one fair shrub, oh! shed thy flowers,  
 And stir not in the gale.  
 For thus to see thee nodding in the air,—  
 To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,  
 Thus rise and thus descend,—  
 Disturbs me, till the sight is more than I can bear.”

The Man who makes this feverish complaint  
 Is one of giant stature, who could dance  
 Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.  
 Ah gentle Love! if ever thought was thine  
 To store up kindred hours for me, thy face  
 Turn from me, gentle Love! nor let me walk  
 Within the sound of Emma's voice, or know  
 Such happiness as I have known to-day.



## XII.

## THE COMPLAINT

OF A

## FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

---

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with Deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he is unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the Desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other Tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work, Hearne's Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean. In the high Northern Latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the Northern Lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise. This circumstance is alluded to in the first stanza of the following poem.]

BEFORE I see another day,  
 Oh let my body die away!  
 In sleep I heard the northern gleams;  
 The stars were mingled with my dreams;  
 In sleep did I behold the skies,  
 I saw the crackling flashes drive;  
 And yet they are upon my eyes,  
 And yet I am alive.  
 Before I see another day,  
 Oh let my body die away!

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;  
 Yet is it dead, and I remain.  
 All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;  
 And they are dead, and I will die.  
 When I was well, I wished to live,  
 For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;  
 But they to me no joy can give,  
 No pleasure now, and no desire.  
 Then here contented will I lie !  
 Alone I cannot fear to die.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on  
 Another day, a single one !  
 Too soon I yielded to despair ;  
 Why did ye listen to my prayer ?  
 When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;  
 And oh how grievously I rue,  
 That, afterwards, a little longer,  
 My Friends, I did not follow you !  
 For strong and without pain I lay,  
 My Friends, when ye were gone away.

My Child! they gave thee to another,  
 A woman who was not thy mother.  
 When from my arms my Babe they took,  
 On me how strangely did he look!  
 Through his whole body something ran,  
 A most strange working did I see;  
 —As if he strove to be a man,  
 That he might pull the sledge for me.  
 And then he stretched his arms, how wild!  
 Oh mercy! like a helpless child.

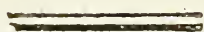
My little joy! my little pride!  
 In two days more I must have died.  
 Then do not weep and grieve for me;  
 I feel I must have died with thee.  
 Oh wind, that o'er my head art flying  
 The way my Friends their course did bend,  
 I should not feel the pain of dying,  
 Could I with thee a message send!  
 Too soon, my Friends, ye went away;  
 For I had many things to say.



I'll follow you across the snow;  
Ye travel heavily and slow;  
In spite of all my weary pain,  
I'll look upon your tents again.  
—My fire is dead, and snowy white  
The water which beside it stood;  
The wolf has come to me to-night,  
And he has stolen away my food.  
For ever left alone am I,  
Then wherefore should I fear to die?

## XIII.

THE

*LAST OF THE FLOCK.*

IN distant countries have I been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy Man, a Man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads alone.  
But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad high-way, I met;  
Along the broad high-way he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet.  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;  
And in his arms a Lamb he had.

He saw me, and he turned aside,  
 As if he wished himself to hide:  
 Then with his coat he made essay  
 To wipe those briny tears away.  
 I followed him, and said, "My Friend,  
 What ails you? wherefore weep you so?"  
 —"Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb,  
 He makes my tears to flow.  
 To-day I fetched him from the rock;  
 He is the last of all my flock.

When I was young, a single Man,  
 And after youthful follies ran,  
 Though little given to care and thought,  
 Yet, so it was, a Ewe I bought;  
 And other sheep from her I raised,  
 As healthy sheep as you might see;  
 And then I married, and was rich  
 As I could wish to be;  
 Of sheep I numbered a full score,  
 And every year increased my store.



Year after year my stock it grew ;  
 And from this one, this single Ewe,  
 Full fifty comely sheep I raised,  
 As sweet a flock as ever grazed !  
 Upon the mountain did they feed,  
 They throve, and we at home did thrive.  
 —This lusty Lamb of all my store  
 Is all that is alive ;  
 And now I care not if we die,  
 And perish all of poverty.

Six Children, Sir ! had I to feed ;  
 Hard labour in a time of need !  
 My pride was tamed, and in our grief  
 I of the Parish asked relief.  
 They said I was a wealthy man ;  
 My sheep upon the mountain fed,  
 And it was fit that thence I took  
 Whereof to buy us bread.”  
 “ Do this : how can we give to you,”  
 They cried, “ what to the poor is due ?”

I sold a sheep, as they had said,  
 And bought my little children bread,  
 And they were healthy with their food ;  
 For me—it never did me good.

A woeful time it was for me,  
 To see the end of all my gains,  
 The pretty flock which I had reared  
 With all my care and pains,  
 To see it melt like snow away !  
 For me it was a woeful day.

Another still ! and still another !  
 A little lamb, and then its mother !  
 It was a vein that never stopp'd—  
 Like blood-drops from my heart they dropp'd.  
 Till thirty were not left alive  
 They dwindled, dwindled, one by one,  
 And I may say, that many a time  
 I wished they all were gone :  
 They dwindled one by one away ;  
 For me it was a woeful day.

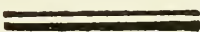
To wicked deeds I was inclined,  
 And wicked fancies crossed my mind ;  
 And every man I chanced to see,  
 I thought he knew some ill of me.  
 No peace, no comfort could I find,  
 No ease, within doors or without ;  
 And crazily, and wearily,  
 I went my work about.  
 Oft-times I thought to run away ;  
 For me it was a woeful day.

Sir! 'twas a precious flock to me,  
 As dear as my own Children be ;  
 For daily with my growing store  
 I loved my Children more and more.  
 Alas! it was an evil time ;  
 God cursed me in my sore distress ;  
 I prayed, yet every day I thought  
 I loved my Children less ;  
 And every week, and every day,  
 My flock, it seemed to melt away.



They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!  
From ten to five, from five to three,  
A lamb, a weather, and a ewe;—  
And then at last, from three to two;  
And, of my fifty, yesterday  
I had but only one :  
And here it lies upon my arm,  
Alas ! and I have none ;—  
To-day I fetched it from the rock ;  
It is the last of all my flock.”

## XIV.

*A COMPLAINT.*

THERE is a change—and I am poor;  
 Your Love hath been, nor long ago,  
 A Fountain at my fond Heart's door,  
 Whose only business was to flow;  
 And flow it did; not taking heed  
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!  
 Bless'd was I then all bliss above!  
 Now, for this consecrated Fount  
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,  
 What have I? shall I dare to tell?  
 A comfortless and hidden WELL.

A Well of love—it may be deep—  
 I trust it is, and never dry:  
 What matter? if the Waters sleep  
 In silence and obscurity.  
 —Such change, and at the very door  
 Of my fond Heart, hath made me poor.

## XV.

*R U T H.*

---

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate  
Her Father took another Mate ;  
And Ruth, not seven years old,  
A slighted Child, at her own will  
Went wandering over dale and hill,  
In thoughtless freedom bold.

And she had made a Pipe of straw,  
And from that oaten Pipe could draw  
All sounds of winds and floods ;  
Had built a Bower upon the green,  
As if she from her birth had been  
An Infant of the woods.

Beneath her Father's roof, alone  
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;  
Herself her own delight :  
Pleased with herself, nor sad nor gay,  
She passed her time ; and in this way  
Grew up to Woman's height.



There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—  
 A military Casque he wore  
 With splendid feathers drest;  
 He brought them from the Cherokees;  
 The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
 And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:  
 Ah no! he spake the English tongue,  
 And bore a Soldier's name;  
 And, when America was free  
 From battle and from jeopardy,  
 He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek  
 In finest tones the Youth could speak.  
 —While he was yet a Boy  
 The moon, the glory of the sun,  
 And streams that murmur as they run,  
 Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth! I guess  
 The panther in the wilderness  
 Was not so fair as he;

And, when he chose to sport and play.  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought ;  
And with him many tales he brought  
Of pleasure and of fear ;  
Such tales as, told to any Maid  
By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
Were perilous to hear.

He told of Girls, a happy rout !  
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,  
Their pleasant Indian Town,  
To gather strawberries all day long ;  
Returning with a choral song  
When day-light is gone down.

He spake of plants divine and strange  
That every hour their blossoms change,  
Ten thousand lovely hues !  
With budding, fading, faded flowers  
They stand the wonder of the bowers  
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the Magnolia\*, spread  
 High as a cloud, high over head!  
 The Cypress and her spire,  
 —Of flowers† that with one scarlet gleam  
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem  
 To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
 And many an endless, endless lake,  
 With all its fairy crowds  
 Of islands, that together lie  
 As quietly as spots of sky  
 Among the evening clouds.

And then he said “ How sweet it were  
 A fisher or a hunter there,  
 A gardener in the shade,  
 Still wandering with an easy mind  
 To build a household fire, and find  
 A home in every glade!

\* Magnolia grandiflora.

† The splendid appearance of these scarlet flowers, which are scattered with such profusion over the Hills in the Southern parts of North America, is frequently mentioned by Bartram in his Travels.



“ What days and what sweet years ! Ah me !  
 Our life were life indeed, with thee  
 So passed in quiet bliss,  
 And all the while,” said he, “ to know  
 That we were in a world of woe,  
 On such an earth as this !”

And then he sometimes interwove  
 Dear thoughts about a Father’s love,  
 “ For there,” said he, “ are spun  
 Around the heart such tender ties,  
 That our own children to our eyes  
 Are dearer than the sun.

“ Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me  
 My helpmate in the woods to be,  
 Our shed at night to rear ;  
 Or run, my own adopted Bride,  
 A sylvan Huntress at my side,  
 And drive the flying deer !

“ Beloved Ruth !”—No more he said.  
 Sweet Ruth alone at midnight shed  
 A solitary tear :

She thought again—and did agree  
 With him to sail across the sea,  
 And drive the flying deer.

“ And now, as fitting is and right,  
 We in the Church our faith will plight,  
 A Husband and a Wife.”

Even so they did ; and I may say  
 That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
 Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
 Delighted all the while to think  
 That, on those lonesome floods,  
 And green savannahs, she should share  
 His board with lawful joy, and bear  
 His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,  
 This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
 And with his dancing crest  
 So beautiful, through savage lands  
 Had roamed about with vagrant bands  
 Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
 The tumult of a tropic sky,  
 Might well be dangerous food  
 For him, a Youth to whom was given  
 So much of earth—so much of Heaven,  
 And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those Climes he found  
 Irregular in sight or sound  
 Did to his mind impart  
 A kindred impulse, seemed allied  
 To his own powers, and justified  
 The workings of his heart.

Nor less to feed voluptuous thought  
 The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
 Fair trees and lovely flowers ;  
 The breezes their own languor lent ;  
 The stars had feelings, which they sent  
 Into those gorgeous bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween  
 That sometimes there did intervene  
 Pure hopes of high intent ;



For passions linked to forms so fair  
 And stately needs must have their share  
 Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw  
 With men to whom no better law  
 Nor better life was known;  
 Deliberately and undeceived  
 Those wild men's vices he received,  
 And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame  
 Were thus impaired, and he became  
 The slave of low desires :  
 A Man who without self-control  
 Would seek what the degraded soul  
 Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight  
 Had wooed the maiden, day and night  
 Had loved her, night and morn :  
 What could he less than love a Maid  
 Whose heart with so much nature played?  
 So kind and so forlorn !

But now the pleasant dream was gone ;  
 No hope, no wish remained, not one,—  
 They stirred him now no more ;  
 New objects did new pleasure give,  
 And once again he wished to live  
 As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
 They for the voyage were prepared,  
 And went to the sea-shore ;  
 But, when they thither came, the Youth  
 Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth  
 Could never find him more.

“ God help thee, Ruth !”—Such pains she had  
 That she in half a year was mad  
 And in a prison housed ;  
 And there, exulting in her wrongs,  
 Among the music of her songs  
 She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
 Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,  
 Nor pastimes of the May,

—They all were with her in her cell;  
 And a wild brook with cheerful knell  
 Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain  
 There came a respite to her pain,  
 She from her prison fled;  
 But of the Vagrant none took thought;  
 And where it liked her best she sought  
 Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again;  
 The master-current of her brain  
 Ran permanent and free;  
 And, coming to the banks of Tone\*,  
 There did she rest; and dwell alone  
 Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools  
 That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
 And airs that gently stir

\* The Tone is a River of Somersetshire at no great distance from the Quantock Hills. These Hills, which are alluded to a few Stanzas below, are extremely beautiful, and in most places richly covered with Coppice woods.



The vernal leaves, she loved them still,  
 Nor ever taxed them with the ill  
 Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies;  
 But till the warmth of summer skies  
 And summer days is gone,  
 (And all do in this tale agree)  
 She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
 And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !  
 And Ruth will, long before her day,  
 Be broken down and old.  
 Sore aches she needs must have ! but less  
 Of mind, than body's wretchedness,  
 From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is pressed by want of food,  
 She from her dwelling in the wood  
 Repairs to a road-side ;  
 And there she begs at one steep place,  
 Where up and down with easy pace  
 The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten Pipe of hers is mute,  
 Or thrown away ; but with a flute  
 Her loneliness she cheers :  
 This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
 At evening in his homeward walk  
 The Quantock Woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
 Setting her little water-mills  
 By spouts and fountains wild—  
 Such small machinery as she turned  
 Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
 A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,  
 Ill-fated Ruth ! in hallowed mould  
 Thy corpse shall buried be ;  
 For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
 And all the congregation sing  
 A Christian psalm for thee.

## XVI.

*THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT.*

BY A FEMALE FRIEND.

See page 8.

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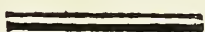
THE days are cold, the nights are long,  
The north-wind sings a doleful song ;  
Then hush again upon my breast ;  
All merry things are now at rest,  
Save thee, my pretty Love!

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,  
The crickets long have ceased their mirth ;  
There's nothing stirring in the house  
Save one *wee*, hungry, nibbling mouse,  
Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light ;  
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright  
On the window-pane bedropped with rain :  
Then, little Darling! sleep again,  
And wake when it is day.



## XVII.

*THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.*

ONE morning (raw it was and wet,  
 A foggy day in winter time)  
 A Woman on the road I met,  
 Not old, though something past her prime :  
 Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;  
 And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient Spirit is not dead ;  
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there ;  
 Proud was I that my country bred  
 Such strength, a dignity so fair :  
 She begged an alms, like one in poor estate ;  
 I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,  
 With the first word I had to spare  
 I said to her, " Beneath your Cloak

What's that which on your arm you bear?"

She answered, soon as she the question heard,  
 "A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,  
 "I had a Son, who many a day  
 Sailed on the seas; but he is dead;  
 In Denmark he was cast away;  
 And I have travelled far as Hull, to see  
 What clothes he might have left, or other property.

"The Bird and Cage they both were his;  
 'Twas my Son's Bird; and neat and trim  
 He kept it: many voyages  
 His Singing-bird hath gone with him;  
 When last he sailed he left the Bird behind;  
 As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

"He to a Fellow-lodger's care  
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,  
 Till he came back again; and there  
 I found it when my Son was dead;  
 And now, God help me for my little wit!  
 I trail it with me, Sir! he took so much delight in it."

## XVIII.

*THE CHILDLESS FATHER.*

“UP, Timothy, up with your Staff and away!  
 Not a soul in the village this morning will stay;  
 The Hare has just started from Hamilton’s grounds,  
 And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds.”

—Of coats and of jackets gray, scarlet, and green,  
 On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen;  
 With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as snow,  
 The Girls on the hills made a holiday show.

The bason of box-wood\*, just six months before,  
 Had stood on the table at Timothy’s door;  
 A Coffin through Timothy’s threshold had past;  
 One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

\* In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a bason full of Sprigs of Box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the Coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a Sprig of this Box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.



Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,  
The horse and the horn, and the hark! hark away!  
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut  
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said,  
“The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead.”  
But of this in my ears not a word did he speak,  
And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

## XIX.

*THE AFFLICTION*

OF

MARGARET ——— OF ———



WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
Where art thou, worse to me than dead?  
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!  
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
Why am I ignorant of the same  
That I may rest; and neither blame  
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received  
No tidings of an only child;  
To have despaired, and have believed,  
And be for evermore beguiled;  
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!  
I catch at them, and then I miss;  
Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,  
 An object beauteous to behold ;  
 Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth  
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :  
 If things ensued that wanted grace,  
 As hath been said, they were not base ;  
 And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the Young One dream,  
 When full of play and childish cares,  
 What power hath even his wildest scream,  
 Heard by his Mother unawares !  
 He knows it not, he cannot guess :  
 Years to a Mother bring distress ;  
 But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me ! no, I suffer'd long  
 From that ill thought ; and, being blind,  
 Said, " Pride shall help me in my wrong :  
 Kind mother have I been, as kind  
 As ever breathed : " and that is true ;  
 I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
 Weeping for him when no one knew.



My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
 Hopeless of honour and of gain,  
 Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;  
 Think not of me with grief and pain :  
 I now can see with better eyes ;  
 And worldly grandeur I despise,  
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas ! the fowls of Heaven have wings,  
 And blasts of Heaven will aid their flight ;  
 They mount, how short a voyage brings  
 The Wanderers back to their delight !  
 Chains tie us down by land and sea ;  
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
 All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,  
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;  
 Or thou upon a Desert thrown  
 Inheritest the Lion's Den ;  
 Or hast been summoned to the Deep,  
 Thou, Thou and all thy mates, to keep  
 An incommunicable sleep.

I look for Ghosts ; but none will force  
 Their way to me ; 'tis falsely said  
 That there was ever intercourse  
 Betwixt the living and the dead ;  
 For, surely, then I should have sight  
 Of Him I wait for day and night,  
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;  
 I dread the rustling of the grass ;  
 The very shadows of the clouds  
 Have power to shake me as they pass :  
 I question things, and do not find  
 One that will answer to my mind ;  
 And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie  
 My troubles, and beyond relief :  
 If any chance to heave a sigh  
 They pity me, and not my grief.  
 Then come to me, my Son, or send  
 Some tidings that my woes may end ;  
 I have no other earthly friend.

XX.

---

ONCE in a lonely Hamlet I sojourned  
In which a Lady driv'n from France did dwell;  
The big and lesser griefs, with which she mourned,  
In friendship she to me would often tell.

This Lady, dwelling upon English ground,  
Where she was childless, daily did repair  
To a poor neighbouring Cottage; as I found,  
For sake of a young Child whose home was there.

Once did I see her clasp the Child about,  
And take it to herself; and I, next day,  
Wish'd in my native tongue to fashion out  
Such things as she unto this Child might say:  
And thus, from what I knew, had heard, and guess'd,  
My song the workings of her heart express'd.



“ Dear Babe, though Daughter of another,  
 One moment let me be thy Mother !  
 An Infant’s face and looks are thine ;  
 And sure a Mother’s heart is mine :  
 Thy own dear Mother’s far away,  
 At labour in the harvest-field :  
 Thy little Sister is at play ;—  
 What warmth, what comfort would it yield  
 To my poor heart, if Thou wouldst be  
 One little hour a child to me !

Across the waters I am come,  
 And I have left a Babe at home :  
 A long, long way of land and sea !  
 Come to me—I’m no enemy :  
 I am the same who at thy side  
 Sate yesterday, and made a nest  
 For thee, sweet Baby!—thou hast tried,  
 Thou know’st, the pillow of my breast :  
 Good, good art thou ;—alas ! to me  
 Far more than I can be to thee.

Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;  
 An Infant Thou, a Mother I !  
 Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;  
 Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.  
 Alas ! before I left the spot,  
 My Baby and its dwelling-place ;  
 The Nurse said to me, ‘ Tears should not  
 Be shed upon an Infant’s face,  
 It was unlucky’—no, no, no ;  
 No truth is in them who say so !

My own dear Little-one will sigh,  
 Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.  
 ‘ He pines,’ they’ll say, ‘ it is his doom,  
 And you may see his hour is come.’  
 Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,  
 Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,  
 Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,  
 And countenance like a summer’s day,  
 They would have hopes of him—and then  
 I should behold his face again !

'Tis gone—forgotten—let me do  
 My best—there was a smile or two,  
 I can remember them, I see  
 The smiles, worth all the world to me.  
 Dear Baby! I must lay thee down;  
 Thou troublest me with strange alarms;  
 Smiles hast Thou, sweet ones of thy own;  
 I cannot keep thee in my arms,  
 For they confound me: as it is,  
 I have forgot those smiles of his.

Oh! how I love thee!—we will stay  
 Together here this one half day.  
 My Sister's Child, who bears my name,  
 From France across the Ocean came;  
 She with her Mother crossed the sea;  
 The Babe and Mother near me dwell:  
 My Darling, she is not to me  
 What thou art! though I love her well:  
 Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!  
 Never was any Child more dear!



—I cannot help it—ill intent  
 I've none, my pretty Innocent!  
 I weep—I know they do thee wrong,  
 These tears—and my poor idle tongue.  
 Oh, what a kiss was that! my cheek  
 How cold it is! but thou art good;  
 Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,  
 I think, to help me if they could.  
 Blessings upon that quiet face,  
 My heart again is in its place!

While thou art mine, my little Love,  
 This cannot be a sorrowful grove;  
 Contentment, hope, and Mother's glee,  
 I seem to find them all in thee:  
 Here's grass to play with, here are flowers;  
 I'll call thee by my Darling's name;  
 Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,  
 Thy features seem to me the same;  
 His little Sister thou shalt be:  
 And, when once more my home I see,  
 I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

XXI.

---

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;  
Her eye-brows have a rusty stain,  
And she came far from over the main.  
She has a Baby on her arm,  
Or else she were alone ;  
And underneath the hay-stack warm,  
And on the green-wood stone,  
She talked and sung the woods among ;  
And it was in the English tongue.

“ Sweet Babe ! they say that I am mad,  
But nay, my heart is far too glad ;  
And I am happy when I sing  
Full many a sad and doleful thing :  
Then, lovely Baby, do not fear !  
I pray thee have no fear of me,  
But, safe as in a cradle, here,  
My lovely Baby ! thou shalt be :  
To thee I know too much I owe ;  
I cannot work thee any woe.

A fire was once within my brain ;  
 And in my head a dull, dull pain ;  
 And fiendish faces one, two, three,  
 Hung at my breasts, and pulled at me.  
 But then there came a sight of joy ;  
 It came at once to do me good ;  
 I waked, and saw my little Boy,  
 My little Boy of flesh and blood ;  
 Oh joy for me that sight to see !  
 For he was here, and only he.

Suck, little Babe, oh suck again !  
 It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;  
 Thy lips I feel them, Baby ! they  
 Draw from my heart the pain away.  
 Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;  
 It loosens something at my chest ;  
 About that tight and deadly band  
 I feel thy little fingers prest.  
 The breeze I see is in the tree ;  
 It comes to cool my Babe and me.



Oh ! love me, love me, little Boy !  
 Thou art thy Mother's only joy ;  
 And do not dread the waves below,  
 When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;  
 The high crag cannot work me harm,  
 Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;  
 The Babe I carry on my arm,  
 He saves for me my precious soul :  
 Then happy lie, for blest am I ;  
 Without me my sweet Babe would die.

Then do not fear, my Boy ! for thee  
 Bold as a lion I will be ;  
 And I will always be thy guide,  
 Through hollow snows and rivers wide.  
 I'll build an Indian bower ; I know  
 The leaves that make the softest bed :  
 And, if from me thou wilt not go,  
 But still be true till I am dead,  
 My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing  
 As merry as the birds in spring.

Thy Father cares not for my breast,  
 'Tis thine, sweet Baby, there to rest :  
 'Tis all thine own !—and, if its hue  
 Be changed, that was so fair to view,  
 'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !  
 My beauty, little Child, is flown ;  
 But thou wilt live with me in love,  
 And what if my poor cheek be brown ?  
 'Tis well for me, thou canst not see  
 How pale and wan it else would be.

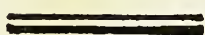
Dread not their taunts, my little life !  
 I am thy Father's wedded Wife ;  
 And underneath the spreading tree  
 We two will live in honesty.  
 If his sweet Boy he could forsake,  
 With me he never would have stayed :  
 From him no harm my Babe can take,  
 But he, poor Man ! is wretched made ;  
 And every day we two will pray  
 For him that's gone and far away.

I'll teach my Boy the sweetest things ;  
 I'll teach him how the owlet sings.  
 My little Babe ! thy lips are still,  
 And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.  
 —Where art thou gone, my own dear Child?  
 What wicked looks are those I see ?  
 Alas ! alas ! that look so wild,  
 It never, never came from me :  
 If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
 Then I must be for ever sad.

Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !  
 For I thy own dear Mother am.  
 My love for thee has well been tried :  
 I've sought thy Father far and wide.  
 I know the poisons of the shade,  
 I know the earth-nuts fit for food ;  
 Then, pretty dear, be not afraid ;  
 We'll find thy Father in the wood.  
 Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !  
 And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."



## XXII.

*THE IDIOT BOY.*

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,  
The Moon is up—the Sky is blue,  
The Owlet in the moonlight air,  
He shouts from nobody knows where;  
He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
Halloo! halloo! a long halloo!

—Why bustle thus about your door,  
What means this bustle, Betty Foy?  
Why are you in this mighty fret?  
And why on horseback have you set  
Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy?

Beneath the Moon that shines so bright,  
Till she is tired, let Betty Foy  
With girt and stirrup fiddle-faddle;  
But wherefore set upon a saddle  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy?

There's scarce a soul that's out of bed ;  
 Good Betty, put him down again ;  
 His lips with joy they burr at you ;  
 But, Betty ! what has he to do  
 With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?

The world will say 'tis very idle,  
 Bethink you of the time of night ;  
 There's not a mother, no not one,  
 But when she hears what you have done,  
 O Betty, she 'll be in a fright.

But Betty's bent on her intent ;  
 For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,  
 Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
 Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,  
 As if her very life would fail.

There's not a house within a mile,  
 No hand to help them in distress :  
 Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,  
 And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
 For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's Husband's at the wood,  
 Where by the week he doth abide,  
 A Woodman in the distant vale ;  
 There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;  
 What must be done ? what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetched  
 Her Pony, that is mild and good,  
 Whether he be in joy or pain,  
 Feeding at will along the lane,  
 Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—  
 And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
 Has up upon the saddle set,  
 (The like was never heard of yet)  
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay  
 Across the bridge that's in the dale,  
 And by the church, and o'er the down,  
 To bring a Doctor from the town,  
 Or she will die, old Susan Gale.



There is no need of boot or spur,  
 There is no need of whip or wand,  
 For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
 And with a hurly-burly now  
 He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
 The Boy who is her best delight  
 Both what to follow, what to shun,  
 What do, and what to leave undone,  
 How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,  
 Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that you  
 Come home again, nor stop at all,—  
 Come home again, whate'er befall,  
 My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,  
 Both with his head, and with his hand,  
 And proudly shook the bridle too;  
 And then! his words were not a few,  
 Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,  
 Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,  
 She gently pats the Pony's side,  
 On which her Idiot Boy must ride,  
 And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,  
 Oh! then for the poor Idiot Boy!  
 For joy he cannot hold the bridle,  
 For joy his head and heels are idle,  
 He's idle all for very joy.

And, while the Pony moves his legs,  
 In Johnny's left hand you may see  
 The green bough's motionless and dead:  
 The Moon that shines above his head  
 Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee,  
 That till full fifty yards were gone,  
 He quite forgot his holly whip  
 And all his skill in horsemanship,  
 Oh! happy, happy, happy John.

And Betty's standing at the door,  
 And Betty's face with joy o'erflows,  
 Proud of herself, and proud of him,  
 She sees him in his travelling trim;  
 How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,  
 What hopes it sends to Betty's heart!  
 He's at the Guide-post—he turns right,  
 She watches till he's out of sight,  
 And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,  
 As loud as any mill, or near it;  
 Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,  
 And Johnny makes the noise he loves,  
 And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale:  
 And Johnny's in a merry tune;  
 The Owlets hoot, the Owlets curr,  
 And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,—  
 And on he goes beneath the Moon.



His Steed and He right well agree,  
For of this Pony there's a rumour,  
That should he lose his eyes and ears,  
And should he live a thousand years,  
He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a Horse that thinks !  
And when he thinks his pace is slack ;  
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,  
Yet for his life he cannot tell  
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,  
And far into the moonlight dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,  
Is in the middle of her story,  
What comfort Johnny soon will bring,  
With many a most diverting thing,  
Of Johnny's wit and Johnny's glory.

And Betty's still at Susan's side :  
 By this time she 's not quite so flurried :  
 Demure with porringer and plate  
 She sits, as if in Susan's fate  
 Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good Woman ! she,  
 You plainly in her face may read it,  
 Could lend out of that moment's store  
 Five years of happiness or more  
 To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then  
 With Betty all was not so well,  
 And to the road she turns her ears,  
 And thence full many a sound she hears,  
 Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;  
 " As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"  
 Cries Betty, " he 'll be back again ;  
 They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—  
 They'll both be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;  
 The clock gives warning for eleven ;  
 'Tis on the stroke—" If Johnny's near,"  
 Quoth Betty, " he will soon be here,  
 As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,  
 And Johnny is not yet in sight,  
 —The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,  
 But Betty is not quite at ease ;  
 And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,  
 On Johnny vile reflections cast :  
 " A little idle sauntering Thing !"  
 With other names, an endless string,  
 But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,  
 That happy time all past and gone,  
 " How can it be he is so late ?  
 The Doctor he has made him wait,  
 Susan ! they'll both be here anon."



And Susan's growing worse and worse,  
 And Betty's in a sad quandary;  
 And then there's nobody to say  
 If she must go or she must stay!  
 —She's in a sad quandary.

The clock is on the stroke of one;  
 But neither Doctor nor his Guide  
 Appear along the moonlight road;  
 There's neither horse nor man abroad,  
 And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan she begins to fear  
 Of sad mischances not a few,  
 That Johnny may perhaps be drowned,  
 Or lost, perhaps, and never found;  
 Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this  
 With, "God forbid it should be true!"  
 At the first word that Susan said  
 Cried Betty, rising from the bed,  
 "Susan, I'd gladly stay with you."

I must be gone, I must away,  
 Consider, Johnny's but half-wise ;  
 Susan, we must take care of him,  
 If he is hurt in life or limb"—  
 " Oh God forbid !" poor Susan cries.

" What can I do ?" says Betty, going,  
 " What can I do to ease your pain ?  
 Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay ;  
 I fear you 're in a dreadful way,  
 But I shall soon be back again."

" Nay, Betty, go ! good Betty, go !  
 There's nothing that can ease my pain."  
 Then off she hies, but with a prayer  
 That God poor Susan's life would spare,  
 Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,  
 And far into the moonlight dale ;  
 And how she ran, and how she walked,  
 And all that to herself she talked,  
 Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,  
 In great and small, in round and square,  
 In tree and tower was Johnny seen,  
 In bush and brake, in black and green,  
 'Twas Johnny, Johnny, every where.

She's past the bridge that's in the dale,  
 And now the thought torments her sore,  
 Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,  
 To hunt the moon that's in the brook,  
 And never will be heard of more.

And now she's high upon the down,  
 Alone amid a prospect wide ;  
 There's neither Johnny nor his Horse  
 Among the fern or in the gorse ;  
 There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

“ Oh saints ! what is become of him ?  
 Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,  
 Where he will stay till he is dead ;  
 Or, sadly he has been misled,  
 And joined the wandering gypsy-folk.



Or him that wicked Pony's carried  
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall ;  
Or in the castle he's pursuing,  
Among the ghosts his own undoing ;  
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,  
While to the town she posts away ;  
" If Susan had not been so ill,  
Alas ! I should have had him still,  
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,  
The Doctor's self would hardly spare ;  
Unworthy things she talked and wild,  
Even he, of cattle the most mild,  
The Pony had his share.

And now she's got into the town,  
And to the Doctor's door she hies ;  
'Tis silence all on every side ;  
The town so long, the town so wide,  
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,  
 She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap ;  
 The Doctor at the casement shows  
 His glimmering eyes that peep and dose !  
 And one hand rubs his old night-cap.

“ Oh Doctor ! Doctor ! where's my Johnny !”

“ I'm here, what is't you want with me ?”

“ Oh Sir ! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
 And I have lost my poor dear Boy,  
 You know him—him you often see ;

He's not so wise as some folks be.”

“ The devil take his wisdom !” said

The Doctor, looking somewhat grim

“ What, Woman ! should I know of him ?”

And, grumbling, he went back to bed.

“ O woe is me ! O woe is me !

Here will I die ; here will I die ;

I thought to find my Johnny here,

But he is neither far nor near,

Oh ! what a wretched Mother I !”

She stops, she stands, she looks about,  
 Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
 Poor Betty ! it would ease her pain  
 If she had heart to knock again ;  
 —The clock strikes three—a dismal knell !

Then up along the town she hies,  
 No wonder if her senses fail,  
 This piteous news so much it shocked her,  
 She quite forgot to send the Doctor,  
 To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,  
 And she can see a mile of road ;  
 “ Oh cruel ! I'm almost threescore ;  
 Such night as this was ne'er before,  
 There's not a single soul abroad.”

She listens, but she cannot hear  
 The foot of horse, the voice of man ;  
 The streams with softest sounds are flowing,  
 The grass you almost hear it growing,  
 You hear it now if e'er you can.



The Owlets through the long blue night  
 Are shouting to each other still :  
 Fond lovers ! yet not quite hob nob,  
 They lengthen out the tremulous sob,  
 That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
 Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin :  
 A green-grown pond she just has past,  
 And from the brink she hurries fast,  
 Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps ;  
 Such tears she never shed before ;  
 “ Oh dear, dear Pony ! my sweet joy !  
 Oh carry back my Idiot Boy !  
 And we will ne’er o’erload thee more.”

A thought is come into her head :  
 “ The Pony he is mild and good,  
 And we have always used him well ;  
 Perhaps he’s gone along the dell,  
 And carried Johnny to the wood.”

Then up she springs, as if on wings ;  
 She thinks no more of deadly sin ;  
 If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
 The last of all her thoughts would be  
 To drown herself therein.

O Reader ! now that I might tell  
 What Johnny and his Horse are doing !  
 What they've been doing all this time,  
 Oh could I put it into rhyme,  
 A most delightful tale pursuing !

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought !  
 He with his Pony now doth roam  
 The cliffs and peaks so high that are,  
 To lay his hands upon a star,  
 And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
 His face unto his horse's tail,  
 And still and mute, in wonder lost,  
 All like a silent Horseman-Ghost,  
 He travels on along the vale.

And now, perhaps, he's hunting sheep,  
 A fierce and dreadful hunter he;  
 Yon valley, that's so trim and green,  
 In five months' time, should he be seen,  
 A desart wilderness will be !

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,  
 And like the very soul of evil,  
 He's galloping away, away,  
 And so he'll gallop on for aye,  
 The bane of all that dread the devil !

I to the Muses have been bound  
 These fourteen years, by strong indentures:  
 O gentle Muses ! let me tell  
 But half of what to him befel,  
 He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses ! is this kind ?  
 Why will ye thus my suit repel ?  
 Why of your further aid bereave me ?  
 And can ye thus unfriended leave me ;  
 Ye Muses ! whom I love so well ?



Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,  
Which thunders down with headlong force,  
Beneath the Moon, yet shining fair,  
As careless as if nothing were,  
Sits upright on a feeding Horse?

Unto his Horse, that's feeding free,  
He seems, I think, the rein to give;  
Of Moon or Stars he takes no heed;  
Of such we in romances read:  
—'Tis Johnny! Johnny! as I live.

And that's the very Pony too!  
Where is she, where is Betty Foy?  
She hardly can sustain her fears;  
The roaring waterfall she hears,  
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold:  
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy!  
She's coming from among the trees,  
And now all full in view she sees  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too :  
 Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?  
 It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,  
 'Tis he whom you so long have lost,  
 He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—  
 She screams—she cannot move for joy ;  
 She darts, as with a torrent's force,  
 She almost has o'erturned the Horse,  
 And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud,  
 Whether in cunning or in joy  
 I cannot tell ; but while he laughs,  
 Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs  
 To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,  
 And now she's at the Pony's head,—  
 On that side now, and now on this ;  
 And, almost stifled with her bliss,  
 A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again  
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;  
 She's happy here, she's happy there,  
 She is uneasy every where ;  
 Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when  
 She knows not, happy Betty Foy !  
 The little Pony glad may be,  
 But he is milder far than she,  
 You hardly can perceive his joy.

" Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor ;  
 You've done your best, and that is all."  
 She took the reins, when this was said,  
 And gently turned the Pony's head  
 From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,  
 The moon was setting on the hill,  
 So pale you scarcely looked at her :  
 The little birds began to stir,  
 Though yet their tongues were still.



The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,  
Wind slowly through the woody dale;  
And who is she, betimes abroad,  
That hobbles up the steep rough road?  
Who is it, but old Susan Gale?

Long Susan lay deep lost in thought,  
And many dreadful fears beset her,  
Both for her Messenger and Nurse;  
And as her mind grew worse and worse,  
Her body it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,  
On all sides doubts and terrors met her;  
Point after point did she discuss;  
And while her mind was fighting thus,  
Her body still grew better.

“Alas! what is become of them?  
These fears can never be endured,  
I’ll to the wood.”—The word scarce said,  
Did Susan rise up from her bed,  
As if by magic cured.

Away she posts up hill and down,  
And to the wood at length is come,  
She spies her Friends, she shouts a greeting ;  
Oh me ! it is a merry meeting  
As ever was in Christendom.

The Owls have hardly sung their last,  
While our four Travellers homeward wend ;  
The Owls have hooted all night long,  
And with the Owls began my song,  
And with the Owls must end.

For, while they all were travelling home,  
Cried Betty, " Tell us, Johnny, do,  
Where all this long night you have been,  
What you have heard, what you have seen,  
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard  
The Owls in tuneful concert strive ;  
No doubt too he the Moon had seen ;  
For in the moonlight he had been  
From eight o'clock till five.

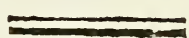
And thus, to Betty's question, he  
Made answer, like a Traveller bold,  
(His very words I give to you,)  
“The Cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,  
And the Sun did shine so cold.”  
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,  
And that was all his travel's story.



## XXIII.

*MICHAEL,*

## A PASTORAL POEM.



IF from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright path  
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent  
The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face.  
But, courage ! for beside that boisterous Brook  
The mountains have all opened out themselves,  
And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation there is seen ; but such  
As journey thither find themselves alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
It is in truth an utter solitude ;  
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell  
But for one object which you might pass by,  
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook

There is a straggling heap of unhewn stones !  
 And to that place a story appertains,  
 Which, though it be ungarnished with events,  
 Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,  
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first,  
 The earliest of those tales that spake to me  
 Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
 Whom I already loved ;—not verily  
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills  
 Where was their occupation and abode.  
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy  
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power  
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
 Of natural objects led me on to feel  
 For passions that were not my own, and think  
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)  
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.  
 Therefore, although it be a history  
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same  
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;  
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
 Of youthful Poets, who among these Hills  
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the Forest-side in Grasmere Vale  
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;  
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
 Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,  
 Intense and frugal, apt for all affairs,  
 And in his Shepherd's calling he was prompt  
 And watchful more than ordinary men.  
 Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,  
 Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,  
 When others heeded not, He heard the South  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of Bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
 "The winds are now devising work for me!"  
 And, truly, at all times, the storm—that drives  
 The Traveller to a shelter—summoned him  
 Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
 That came to him and left him on the heights.  
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.



And grossly that man errs, who should suppose  
 That the green Valleys, and the Streams and Rocks  
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.  
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed  
 The common air ; the hills, which he so oft  
 Had climbed with vigorous steps ; which had impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;  
 Which like a book preserved the memory  
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,  
 So grateful in themselves, the certainty  
 Of honourable gain ; these fields, these hills,  
 Which were his living Being, even more  
 Than his own blood—what could they less ? had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.  
 His Helpmate was a comely Matron, old—  
 Though younger than himself full twenty years.  
 She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had

Of antique form, this large for spinning wool,  
 That small for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,  
 It was because the other was at work.  
 The Pair had but one Inmate in their house,  
 An only Child, who had been born to them  
 When Michael telling o'er his years began  
 To deem that he was old,—in Shepherd's phrase,  
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son,  
 With two brave Sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,  
 The one of an inestimable worth,  
 Made all their Household. I may truly say,  
 That they were as a proverb in the vale  
 For endless industry. When day was gone,  
 And from their occupations out of doors  
 The Son and Father were come home, even then  
 Their labour did not cease ; unless when all  
 Turned to their cleanly supper-board, and there,  
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,  
 Sat round their basket piled with oaten cakes,  
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when their meal  
 Was ended, LUKE (for so the Son was named)  
 And his old Father both betook themselves  
 To such convenient work as might employ  
 Their hands by the fire-side ; perhaps to card



Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair  
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the cieling, by the chimney's edge,  
 Which in our ancient uncouth country style  
 Did with a huge projection overbrow  
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a Lamp;  
 An aged utensil, which had performed  
 Service beyond all others of its kind.  
 Early at evening did it burn and late,  
 Surviving Comrade of uncounted Hours,  
 Which going by from year to year had found  
 And left the couple neither gay perhaps  
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,  
 Living a life of eager industry.  
 And now, when LUKE was in his eighteenth year,  
 There by the light of this old Lamp they sat,  
 Father and Son, while late into the night  
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,  
 Making the cottage through the silent hours  
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.  
 This Light was famous in its neighbourhood,



And was a public Symbol of the life  
 The thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,  
 Their Cottage on a plot of rising ground  
 Stood single, with large prospect, North and South,  
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmal-Raise,  
 And Westward to the village near the Lake;  
 And from this constant light, so regular  
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
 Both old and young, was named The EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years,  
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs  
 Have loved his Help-mate; but to Michael's heart  
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—  
 Effect which might perhaps have been produced  
 By that instinctive tenderness, the same  
 Blind Spirit, which is in the blood of all—  
 Or that a child, more than all other gifts,  
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,  
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.  
 From such, and other causes, to the thoughts  
 Of the old Man his only Son was now

The dearest object that he knew on earth.  
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
 His Heart and his Heart's joy! For oftentimes  
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
 Had done him female service, not alone  
 For dalliance and delight, as is the use  
 Of Fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked  
 His cradle with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
 Had put on Boy's attire, did Michael love,  
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
 To have the young one in his sight, when he  
 Had work by his own door, or when he sat  
 With sheep before him on his Shepherd's stool,  
 Beneath that large old Oak, which near their door  
 Stood,—and, from its enormous breadth of shade  
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,  
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
 The CLIPPING TREE \*, a name which yet it bears.  
 There, while they two were sitting in the shade,

\* Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.



With others round them, earnest all and blithe,  
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts  
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the Boy grew up  
 A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
 Two steady roses that were five years old,  
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped  
 With iron, making it throughout in all  
 Due requisites a perfect Shepherd's Staff,  
 And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt  
 He as a Watchman oftentimes was placed  
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;  
 And, to his office prematurely called,  
 There stood the Urchin, as you will divine,  
 Something between a hindrance and a help ;  
 And for this cause not always, I believe,  
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;  
 Though nought was left undone which staff or voice,  
 Or looks, or threatening gestures could perform.



But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand  
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,  
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
 He with his Father daily went, and they  
 Were as companions, why should I relate  
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before  
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came  
 Feelings and emanations,—things which were  
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;  
 And that the Old Man's heart seemed born again.

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :  
 And now when he had reached his eighteenth year,  
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.

WHILE in this sort the simple Household lived  
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came  
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound  
 In surety for his Brother's Son, a man  
 Of an industrious life, and ample means,—  
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
 Had pressed upon him,—and old Michael now

Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,  
A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,  
At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he supposed  
That any old man ever could have lost.  
As soon as he had gathered so much strength  
That he could look his trouble in the face,  
It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell  
A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,  
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,  
Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,  
And in the open sunshine of God's love  
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours  
Should pass into a Stranger's hand, I think  
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
Our lot is a hard lot; the Sun itself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I,  
And I have lived to be a fool at last  
To my own family. An evil Man  
That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us; and, if he were not false,



There are ten thousand to whom loss like this  
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him—but  
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.  
 When I began, my purpose was to speak  
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.  
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;  
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,  
 Another Kinsman—he will be our friend  
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,  
 And with his Kinsman's help and his own thrift  
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
 May come again to us. If here he stay,  
 What can be done? Where every one is poor  
 What can be gained?" At this the old man paused,  
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
 Was busy, looking back into past times.  
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,  
 He was a Parish-boy—at the Church-door  
 They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence,  
 And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought  
 A Basket, which they filled with Pedlar's wares;



And, with this Basket on his arm, the Lad  
 Went up to London, found a Master there,  
 Who out of many chose the trusty Boy  
 To go and overlook his merchandise  
 Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,  
 And left estates and monies to the poor,  
 And at his birth-place built a Chapel floored  
 With Marble, which he sent from foreign lands.  
 These thoughts, and many others of like sort,  
 Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
 And her face brightened. The Old Man was glad,  
 And thus resumed :—" Well, Isabel ! this scheme  
 These two days has been meat and drink to me.  
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet.  
 —We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
 Were younger,—but this hope is a good hope.  
 —Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best  
 Buy for him more, and let us send him forth  
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :  
 —If he could go, the Boy should go to-night."  
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth  
 With a light heart. The Housewife for five days  
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long

Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare  
 Things needful for the journey of her Son.  
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
 To stop her in her work : for, when she lay  
 By Michael's side, she through the two last nights  
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep :  
 And when they rose at morning she could see  
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon  
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves  
 Were sitting at the door, " Thou must not go :  
 We have no other child but thee to lose,  
 None to remember—do not go away,  
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die."  
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;  
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare  
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

Next morning Isabel resumed her work ;  
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared  
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length  
 The expected letter from their Kinsman came,



With kind assurances that he would do  
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;  
 To which requests were added that forthwith  
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more  
 The letter was read over; Isabel  
 Went forth to show it to the neighbours round;  
 Nor was there at that time on English Land  
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel  
 Had to her house returned, the Old Man said,  
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word  
 The Housewife answered, talking much of things  
 Which, if at such short notice he should go,  
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,  
 In that deep Valley, Michael had designed  
 To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he heard  
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
 For this same purpose he had gathered up  
 A heap of stones, which by the Streamlet's edge  
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walked;



And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,  
 And thus the Old Man spake to him :— “ My Son,  
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart  
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
 I will relate to thee some little part  
 Of our two histories ; ’t will do thee good  
 When thou art from me, even if I should speak  
 Of things thou canst not know of.—After thou  
 First cam’st into the world—as it befalls  
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away  
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father’s tongue  
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,  
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-side  
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;  
 When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy  
 Sing at thy Mother’s breast. Month followed month,  
 And in the open fields my life was passed  
 And on the mountains, else I think that thou  
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father’s knees.  
 But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,

As well thou know'st, in us the old and young  
 Have played together, nor with me didst thou  
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."  
 Luke had a manly heart; but at these words  
 He sobbed aloud. The Old Man grasped his hand,  
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
 That these are things of which I need not speak.  
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
 A kind and a good Father: and herein  
 I but repay a gift which I myself  
 Received at others' hands; for, though now old  
 Beyond the common life of man, I still  
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.  
 Both of them sleep together: here they lived,  
 As all their Forefathers had done; and when  
 At length their time was come, they were not loth  
 To give their bodies to the family mold.  
 I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived.  
 But 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,  
 And see so little gain from sixty years.  
 These fields were burthened when they came to me;  
 Till I was forty years of age, not more  
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.  
 I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my work,



And till these three weeks past the land was free.  
 —It looks as if it never could endure  
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,  
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
 That thou shouldst go.” At this the Old Man paus’d ;  
 Then, pointing to the Stones near which they stood,  
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :  
 “ This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,  
 It is a work for me. But, lay one Stone—  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.  
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope :—we both may live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and stout ;—do thou thy part,  
 I will do mine.—I will begin again  
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee ;  
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,  
 Will I without thee go again, and do  
 All works which I was wont to do alone,  
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Boy!  
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast  
 With many hopes—It should be so—Yes—yes—  
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish  
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me  
 Only by links of love: when thou art gone,



What will be left to us !—But, I forget  
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,  
 As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,  
 When thou art gone away, should evil men  
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
 And of this moment; hither turn thy thoughts,  
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all fear  
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou  
 Mayst bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived,  
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—  
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see  
 A work which is not here : a covenant  
 'Twill be between us——But, whatever fate  
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,  
 And, as his Father had requested, laid  
 The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight  
 The Old Man's grief broke from him, to his heart  
 He press'd his Son, he kissed him and wept ;  
 And to the House together they returned.  
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,

Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy  
 Began his journey, and when he had reached  
 The public Way, he put on a bold face ;  
 And all the Neighbours as he passed their doors  
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,  
 That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,  
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy  
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,  
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout  
 “ The prettiest letters that were ever seen.”  
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.  
 So, many months passed on : and once again  
 The Shepherd went' about his daily work  
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now  
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour  
 He to that valley took his way, and there  
 Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began  
 To slacken in his duty ; and at length  
 He in the dissolute city gave himself  
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame  
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.



There is a comfort in the strength of love ;  
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else  
 Would break the heart :—Old Michael found it so.  
 I have conversed with more than one who well  
 Remember the Old Man, and what he was  
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
 He went, and still looked up upon the sun,  
 And listened to the wind ; and as before  
 Performed all kinds of labour for his Sheep,  
 And for the land his small inheritance.  
 And to that hollow Dell from time to time  
 Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet  
 The pity which was then in every heart  
 For the Old Man—and 'tis believed by all  
 That many and many a day he thither went,  
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he seen  
 Sitting alone, with that his faithful Dog,  
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.



The length of full seven years from time to time  
 He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,  
 And left the work unfinished when he died.  
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
 Survive her Husband: at her death the estate  
 Was sold, and went into a Stranger's hand.  
 The Cottage which was named The EVENING STAR  
 Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground  
 On which it stood; great changes have been wrought  
 In all the neighbourhood:—yet the Oak is left  
 That grew beside their Door; and the remains  
 Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen  
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

## XXIV.

*LAODAMIA.*

“ WITH sacrifice, before the rising morn  
 Performed, my slaughtered Lord have I required ;  
 And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,  
 Him of the infernal Gods have I desired :  
 Celestial pity I again implore ;—  
 Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore !”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
 With faith, the suppliant heav’n-ward lifts her hands ;  
 While, like the Sun emerging from a Cloud,  
 Her countenance brightens,—and her eye expands,  
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows,  
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—O joy !  
 What doth she look on ?—whom doth she behold ?  
 Her hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?  
 His vital presence—his corporeal mold ?  
 It is—if sense deceive her not—’tis He !  
 And a God leads him—winged Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with his wand  
 That calms all fear, “Such grace hath crowned thy prayer,  
 Laodamia, that at Jove’s command  
 Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air :  
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours’ space ;  
 Accept the gift, behold him face to face.”

Forth sprang the impassion’d Queen her Lord to clasp ;  
 Again that consummation she essayed ;  
 But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
 As often as that eager grasp was made.  
 The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,  
 And re-assume his place before her sight.

“Protesilaus, lo ! thy guide is gone !  
 Confirm, I pray, the Vision with thy voice :  
 This is our Palace,—yonder is thy throne ;  
 Speak, and the floor thou tread’st on will rejoice.  
 Not to appal me have the Gods bestowed  
 This precious boon,—and blest a sad Abode.”

“Great Jove, Laodamia, doth not leave  
 His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I be,  
 I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;  
 But in reward of thy fidelity.  
 And something also did my worth obtain ;  
 For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.



Thou know'st, the Delphic oracle foretold  
 That the first Greek who touch'd the Trojan strand  
 Should die ; but me the threat did not withhold :  
 A generous cause a Victim did demand ;  
 And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;  
 A self-devoted Chief—by Hector slain.”

“ Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest, best !  
 Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
 That then, when tens of thousands were deprest  
 By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore :  
 Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here thou art—  
 A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

But thou, though capable of sternest deed,  
 Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;  
 And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed  
 That thou shouldst cheat the malice of the grave ;  
 Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
 As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow this :  
 Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side !  
 Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss  
 To me, this day, a second time thy bride !”  
 Jove frowned in heaven ; the conscious Parcæ threw  
 Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“ This visage tells thee that my doom is past :

Know, virtue were not virtue if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast

And surely as they vanish.—Earth destroys

Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains :

Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control

Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve

The depth, and not the tumult of the soul ;

The fervor—not the impotence of love.

Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—”

“ Ah, wherefore ?—Did not Hercules by force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb

Alcestis, a reanimated Corse,

Given back to dwell on earth in beauty's bloom ?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,

And Æson stood a Youth mid youthful peers.

The Gods to us are merciful—and they

Yet further may relent : for mightier far

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway

Of magic potent over sun and star

Is love, though oft to agony distress,

And though his favorite seat be feeble Woman's breast.



But if thou go'st, I follow—" "Peace!" he said—  
 She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered;  
 The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;  
 In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared  
 Elysian beauty—melancholy grace—  
 Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
 In worlds whose course is equable and pure;  
 No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—  
 The past unsighed for, and the future sure;  
 Spake, as a witness, of a second birth  
 For all that is most perfect upon earth:

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there  
 In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,  
 An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
 And fields invested with purpureal gleams;  
 Climes which the Sun, who sheds the brightest day  
 Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned  
 That privilege by virtue.—"Ill," said he,  
 "The end of man's existence I discerned,  
 Who from ignoble games and revelry \*

\* Note.—For this feature in the character of Protesilaus, see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides.



Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight  
While tears were thy best pastime,—day and night :

And while my youthful peers, before my eyes,  
(Each Hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprize  
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;  
What time the Fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

The wish'd-for wind was given :—I then revolved  
Our future course, upon the silent sea ;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be  
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—  
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife ;  
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—  
The paths which we had trod—these fountains—flowers ;  
My new-planned Cities, and unfinished Towers.

But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,  
“ Behold they tremble !—haughty their array,  
Yet of their number no one dares to die ? ”—  
In soul I swept the indignity away :

Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty thought,  
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak  
In reason, in self-government too slow;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek  
Our blest re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sympathized;  
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend  
Towards a higher object :—Love was given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for this end.  
For this the passion to excess was driven—  
That self might be annulled; her bondage prov  
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes re-appears !  
Round the dear Shade she would have clung—’tis vain :  
The hours are past, too brief had they been years ;  
And him no mortal effort can detain :  
Swift tow’rd the realms that know not earthly day,  
He through the portal takes his silent way—  
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay

Ah, judge her gently who so deeply loved !  
 Her, who, in reason's spite, yet without crime,  
 Was in a trance of passion thus removed ;  
 Delivered from the galling yoke of time  
 And these frail elements—to gather flowers  
 Of blissful quiet mid unfading bowers.

Yet tears to human suffering are due ;  
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown  
 Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,  
 As fondly he believes.—Upon the side  
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
 From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;  
 And ever, when such stature they had gained  
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,  
 The trees' tall summits wither'd at the sight ;  
 \* A constant interchange of growth and blight !

\* For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's Natural History, Lib. 16. Cap. 44.



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POEMS  
OF THE FANCY.

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I.

TO THE DAISY.

---

*“ Her\* divine skill taught me this,  
That from every thing I saw  
I could some instruction draw,  
And raise pleasure to the height  
Through the meanest object's sight.  
By the murmur of a spring  
Or the least bough's rustelling ;  
By a Daisy whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;  
Or a shady bush or tree ;  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man.”*

G. WITHERS.

IN youth from rock to rock I went,  
From hill to hill, in discontent  
Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
Most pleased when most uneasy ;  
But now my own delights I make,—  
My thirst at every rill can slake,  
And gladly Nature's love partake  
Of thee, sweet Daisy !

\* His Muse.



When soothed a while by milder airs,  
 Thee Winter in the garland wears  
 That thinly shades his few grey hairs ;  
       Spring cannot shun thee ;  
 Whole summer fields are thine by right ;  
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight !  
 Doth in thy crimson head delight  
       When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
 Thou greet'st the Traveller in the lane ;  
 If welcom'd once thou count'st it gain ;  
       Thou art not daunted,  
 Nor car'st if thou be set at naught :  
 And oft alone in nooks remote  
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
       When such are wanted.

Be Violets in their secret mews  
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;  
 Proud be the Rose, with rains and dews  
       Her head impearling ;

Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame;  
 Thou art indeed by many a claim  
     The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
 Or, some bright day of April sky,  
 Imprison'd by hot sunshine lie  
     Near the green holly,  
 And wearily at length should fare;  
 He need but look about, and there  
 Thou art!—a Friend at hand, to scare  
     His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,  
 Have I derived from thy sweet power  
     Some apprehension;  
 Some steady love; some brief delight;  
 Some memory that had taken flight;  
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right;  
     Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
 I drink out of an humbler urn

A lowlier pleasure ;  
 The homely sympathy that heeds  
 The common life, our nature breeds ;  
 A wisdom fitted to the needs  
 Of hearts at leisure.

When, smitten by the morning ray,  
 I see thee rise alert and gay,  
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play  
 With kindred gladness :  
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest  
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
 Hath often eased my pensive breast  
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,  
 All seasons through, another debt,  
 Which I, wherever thou art met,  
 To thee am owing ;



An instinct call it, a blind sense ;  
 A happy, genial influence,  
 Coming one knows not how nor whence,  
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run  
 Thy course, bold lover of the sun,  
 And cheerful when the day's begun  
 As morning Leveret,  
 \* Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;  
 Dear shalt thou be to future men  
 As in old time ;—thou not in vain,  
 Art Nature's Favorite.

\* See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

## II.



A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound :  
Then—all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered round.  
Where leafless Oaks towered high above,  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er,  
You could not lay a hair between :  
And all the year the bower is green.  
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop  
The withered leaves all skip and hop,  
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—  
Yet here, and there, and every where

Along the floor, beneath the shade  
By those embowering hollies made,  
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
As if with pipes and music rare  
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,  
And all those leaves in festive glee  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.



## III.



“ WITH how sad steps, O Moon thou climb’st the sky,  
How silently, and with how wan a face\* !”

Where art thou? Thou whom I have seen on high  
Running among the clouds a Wood-nymph’s race !

Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath’s a sigh  
Which they would stifle, move at such a pace !

The Northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,  
Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I

The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should be :

And all the Stars, now shrouded up in heaven,  
Should sally forth to keep thee company.

What strife would then be yours, fair Creatures, driven  
Now up, now down, and sparkling in your glee !

But, Cynthia, should to Thee the palm be given,  
Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

\* From a sonnet of Sir Philip Sydney.

## IV.

*THE GREEN LINNET.*  

---

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
With brightest sunshine round me spread  
    Of spring's unclouded weather,  
In this sequestered nook how sweet  
To sit upon my Orchard-seat!  
And Flowers and Birds once more to greet,  
    My last year's Friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest Guest  
In all this covert of the blest:  
Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
    In joy of voice and pinion,  
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May,  
    And this is thy dominion.

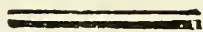
While Birds, and Butterflies, and Flowers  
 Make all one Band of Paramours,  
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
     Art sole in thy employment;  
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
 Scattering thy gladness without care,  
 Too bless'd with any one to pair,  
     Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,  
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
 Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
     Yet seeming still to hover;  
 There! where the flutter of his wings  
 Upon his back and body flings  
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
     That cover him all over.

While thus before my eyes he gleams,  
 A Brother of the Leaves he seems;  
 When in a moment forth he teems  
     His little song in gushes:  
 As if it pleased him to disdain  
 And mock the Form which he did feign,  
 While he was dancing with the train  
     Of Leaves among the bushes.



## V.

*TO THE SMALL CELANDINE\*.*

PANSIES, Lilies, Kingcups, Daisies,  
Let them live upon their praises ;  
Long as there's a sun that sets  
Primroses will have their glory ;  
Long as there are Violets,  
They will have a place in story :  
There's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far  
For the finding of a star ;  
Up and down the heavens they go,  
Men that keep a mighty rout !  
I'm as great as they, I trow,  
Since the day I found thee out,  
Little flower !—I'll make a stir  
Like a great Astronomer.

\* Common Pilewort.

Modest, yet withal an Elf  
 Bold, and lavish of thyself,  
 Since we needs must first have met  
 I have seen thee, high and low,  
 Thirty years or more, and yet  
 'Twas a face I did not know ;  
 Thou hast now, go where I may,  
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,  
 In the time before the Thrush  
 Has a thought about it's nest,  
 Thou wilt come with half a call,  
 Spreading out thy glossy breast  
 Like a careless Prodigal ;  
 Telling tales about the sun,  
 When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !  
 Travel with the multitude ;  
 Never heed them ; I aver  
 That they all are wanton Wooers ;  
 But the thrifty Cottager,  
 Who stirs little out of doors,  
 Joys to spy thee near her home,  
 Spring is coming, Thou art come !

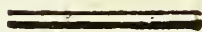
Comfort have thou of thy merit,  
 Kindly, unassuming Spirit!  
 Careless of thy neighbourhood,  
 Thou dost shew thy pleasant face  
 On the moor, and in the wood,  
 In the lane—there's not a place,  
 Howsoever mean it be,  
 But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow Flowers,  
 Children of the flaring hours!  
 Buttercups, that will be seen,  
 Whether we will see or no;  
 Others, too, of lofty mien;  
 They have done as worldlings do,  
 Taken praise that should be thine,  
 Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,  
 Scorned and slighted upon earth!  
 Herald of a mighty band,  
 Of a joyous train ensuing,  
 Singing at my heart's command,  
 In the lanes my thoughts pursuing,  
 I will sing, as doth behove,  
 Hymns in praise of what I love!



## VI.

*TO THE SAME FLOWER.*

PLEASURES newly found are sweet  
When they lie about our feet :  
February last my heart  
First at sight of thee was glad ;  
All unheard of as thou art,  
Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
Celandine ! and long ago,  
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
Whosoe'er the man might be,  
Who the first with pointed rays,  
(Workman worthy to be sainted)  
Set the Sign-board in a blaze,  
When the risen sun he painted,  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
 News of winter's vanishing,  
 And the children build their bowers,  
 Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mold  
 All about with full-blown flowers,  
 Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!  
 With the proudest Thou art there,  
 Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
 By myself a lonely pleasure,  
 Sighed to think, I read a book  
 Only read perhaps by me;  
 Yet I long could overlook  
 Thy bright coronet and Thee,  
 And thy arch and wily ways,  
 And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
 Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;  
 While the patient Primrose sits  
 Like a Beggar in the cold,  
 Thou, a Flower of wiser wits,  
 Slipp'st into thy shelter'd hold;  
 Bright as any of the train  
 When ye all are out again.

Thou art not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon:"  
Let, as old Magellan did,  
Others roam about the sea;  
Build who will a pyramid;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower.



## VII.

THE

*WATERFALL*

AND

*THE EGLANTINE.*

“BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,”  
Exclaimed a thundering Voice,  
“Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self  
Between me and my choice!”  
A falling Water swoln with snows  
Thus spake to a poor Briar-rose,  
That, all bespattered with his foam,  
And dancing high, and dancing low,  
Was living, as a child might know,  
In an unhappy home.

“ Dost thou presume my course to block?

Off, off! or, puny Thing!

I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock

To which thy fibres cling.”

The Flood was tyrannous and strong;

The patient Briar suffered long,

Nor did he utter groan or sigh,

Hoping the danger would be past :

But seeing no relief, at last

He ventured to reply.

“ Ah!” said the Briar, “ blame me not ;

Why should we dwell in strife ?

We who in this, our natal spot,

Once lived a happy life !

You stirred me on my rocky bed—

What pleasure through my veins you spread !

The Summer long from day to day

My leaves you freshened and bedewed ;

Nor was it common gratitude

That did your cares repay.

“ When Spring came on with bud and bell,  
 Among these rocks did I  
 Before you hang my wreaths, to tell  
 That gentle days were nigh !  
 And in the sultry summer hours  
 I sheltered you with leaves and flowers ;  
 And in my leaves—now shed and gone,  
 The Linnet lodged, and for us two  
 Chaunted his pretty songs, when You  
 Had little voice or none.

“ But now proud thoughts are in your breast—  
 What grief is mine you see.  
 Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest  
 Together we might be !  
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft,  
 Some ornaments to me are left—  
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,  
 With which I in my humble way  
 Would deck you many a winter’s day,  
 A happy Eglantine !”



What more he said I cannot tell.  
The Torrent thundered down the dell  
With unabating haste ;  
I listened, nor aught else could hear ;  
The Briar quaked—and much I fear  
Those accents were his last.

## VIII.

*THE OAK AND THE BROOM.*

A PASTORAL.

---

HIS simple truths did Andrew glean  
Beside the babbling rills ;  
A careful student he had been  
Among the woods and hills.  
One winter's night, when through the Trees  
The wind was thundering, on his knees  
His youngest born did Andrew hold :  
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,  
Were seated round their blazing fire,  
This Tale the Shepherd told.

I saw a crag, a lofty stone  
 As ever tempest beat!  
 Out of its head an Oak had grown,  
 A Broom out of its feet.  
 The time was March, a cheerful noon—  
 The thaw-wind with the breath of June  
 Breathed gently from the warm South-west;  
 When, in a voice sedate with age,  
 This Oak, a giant and a sage,  
 His neighbour thus addressed:

“ Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,  
 Along this mountain’s edge,  
 The Frost hath wrought both night and day,  
 Wedge driving after wedge.  
 Look up! and think, above your head  
 What trouble surely will be bred;  
 Last night I heard a crash—’tis true,  
 The splinters took another road—  
 I see them yonder—what a load  
 For such a Thing as you!



You are preparing as before  
 To deck your slender shape;  
 And yet, just three years back—no more—  
 You had a strange escape.  
 Down from yon Cliff a fragment broke;  
 It came, you know, with fire and smoke,  
 And hitherward it bent its way :  
 This ponderous Block was caught by me,  
 And o'er your head, as you may see,  
 'Tis hanging to this day !

The Thing had better been asleep,  
 Whatever thing it were,  
 Or Breeze, or Bird, or Dog, or Sheep,  
 That first did plant you there.  
 For you and your green twigs decoy  
 The little witless Shepherd-boy  
 To come and slumber in your bower;  
 And, trust me, on some sultry noon,  
 Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon!  
 Will perish in one hour.

From me this friendly warning take"—

The Broom began to doze,

And thus to keep herself awake

Did gently interpose:

" My thanks for your discourse are due ;

That it is true, and more than true,

I know, and I have known it long ;

Frail is the bond, by which we hold

Our being, be we young or old,

Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

Disasters, do the best we can,

Will reach both great and small ;

And he is oft the wisest man,

Who is not wise at all.

For me, why should I wish to roam ?

This spot is my paternal home,

It is my pleasant Heritage ;

My Father many a happy year

Here spread his careless blossoms, here

Attained a good old age.

Even such as his may be my lot.  
 What cause have I to haunt  
 My heart with terrors? Am I not  
 In truth a favoured plant!  
 On me such bounty Summer pours  
 That I am covered o'er with flowers;  
 And, when the Frost is in the sky,  
 My branches are so fresh and gay  
 That You might look at me and say,  
 This Plant can never die.

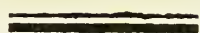
The Butterfly, all green and gold,  
 To me hath often flown,  
 Here in my Blossoms to behold  
 Wings lovely as his own.  
 When grass is chill with rain or dew,  
 Beneath my shade the mother Ewe  
 Lies with her infant Lamb; I see  
 The love they to each other make,  
 And the sweet joy, which they partake,  
 It is a joy to me."



Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;  
The Broom might have pursued  
Her speech, until the stars of night  
Their journey had renewed.  
But in the branches of the Oak  
Two Ravens now began to croak  
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;  
And to her own green bower the breeze  
That instant brought two stripling Bees  
To rest and murmur there.

One night, my Children ! from the North  
There came a furious blast ;  
At break of day I ventured forth,  
And near the Cliff I passed.  
The storm had fallen upon the Oak  
And struck him with a mighty stroke,  
And whirled and whirled him far away ;  
And in one hospitable Cleft  
The little careless Broom was left  
To live for many a day.

## IX.

*The REDBREAST and the BUTTERFLY.*

ART thou the Bird whom Man loves best,

The pious Bird with the scarlet breast,

Our little English Robin;

The Bird that comes about our doors

When Autumn winds are sobbing?

Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors?

Their Thomas in Finland,

And Russia far inland?

The Bird, whom by some name or other

All men who know thee call their Brother,

The Darling of Children and men?

\* Could Father Adam open his eyes,

And see this sight beneath the skies,

He'd wish to close them again.

If the Butterfly knew but his friend,

Hither his flight he would bend;

\* See *Paradise Lost*, Book XI, where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing "two Birds of gayest plume," and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

And find his way to me  
 Under the branches of the tree :  
 In and out, he darts about ;  
 Can this be the Bird, to man so good,  
 That, after their bewildering,  
 Did cover with leaves the little children,  
 So painfully in the wood ?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st pursue  
     A beautiful Creature,  
 That is gentle by nature ?  
 Beneath the summer sky  
 From flower to flower let him fly ;  
 'Tis all that he wishes to do.  
 The Cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,  
 He is the Friend of our summer gladness :  
 What hinders, then, that ye should be  
 Playmates in the sunny weather,  
 And fly about in the air together !  
 His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,  
 A crimson as bright as thine own :  
 If thou would'st be happy in thy nest,  
 O pious Bird ! whom Man loves best,  
 Love him, or leave him alone !



## X.

*TO THE DAISY\*.*

WITH little here to do or see  
Of things that in the great world be,  
Sweet Daisy! oft I talk to thee,  
For thou art worthy,  
Thou unassuming Common-place  
Of Nature, with that homely face,  
And yet with something of a grace,  
Which Love makes for thee!

Oft do I sit by thee at ease,  
And weave a web of similies,  
Loose types of Things through all degrees,  
Thoughts of thy raising:

\* The two following Poems were overflowings of the mind in composing the one which stands first in this Class.

And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
 As is the humour of the game,  
     While I am gazing.

A Nun demure, of lowly port ;  
 Or sprightly Maiden, of Love's Court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport  
     Of all temptations ;  
 A Queen in crown of rubies drest ;  
 A Starveling in a scanty vest ;  
 Are all, as seem to suit thee best,  
     Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next—and instantly  
     The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish, and behold !  
 A silver Shield with boss of gold,  
 That spreads itself, some Faery bold  
     In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar ;—  
 And then thou art a pretty Star ;  
 Not quite so fair as many are  
     In heaven above thee !

Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
     Who shall reprove thee !

Sweet Flower ! for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
     Sweet silent Creature !

That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
     Of thy meek nature !



## XI.

*TO THE SAME FLOWER.*

BRIGHT flower, whose home is every where!  
A Pilgrim bold in Nature's care,  
And all the long year through the heir  
    Of joy or sorrow,  
Methinks that there abides in thee  
Some concord with humanity,  
Given to no other Flower I see  
    The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,  
Does little on his memory rest,  
    Or on his reason,  
And Thou would'st teach him how to find  
A shelter under every wind,  
A hope for times that are unkind  
    And every season?

Thou wanderest the wide world about,  
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
With friends to greet thee, or without,  
    Yet pleased and willing;  
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
And all things suffering from all,  
Thy function apostolical  
    In peace fulfilling.

## XII.

*TO A SKY-LARK.*

---

UP with me ! up with me into the clouds !

For thy song, Lark, is strong ;

Up with me, up with me into the clouds !

Singing, singing

With all the heavens about thee ringing,

Lift me, guide me till I find

That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,

And to-day my heart is weary ;

Had I now the wings of a Faery,

Up to thee would I fly.

There is madness about thee, and joy divine

In that song of thine ;

Up with me, up with me, high and high,

To thy banqueting-place in the sky !

Joyous as Morning,

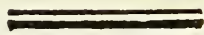
Thou art laughing and scorning ;



Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest :  
And, though little troubled with sloth,  
Drunken Lark ! thou would'st be loth  
To be such a Traveller as I.

Happy, happy Liver !  
With a soul as strong as a mountain River,  
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
Joy and jollity be with us both !  
Hearing thee, or else some other,  
As merry a Brother,  
I on the earth will go plodding on,  
By myself, cheerfully, till the day is done.

## XIII.

*TO A SEXTON.*

LET thy wheel-barrow alone—  
 Wherefore, Sexton, piling still  
 In thy Bone-house bone on bone?  
 'Tis already like a hill  
 In a field of battle made,  
 Where three thousand skulls are laid.  
 —These died in peace each with the other,  
 Father, Sister, Friend, and Brother.

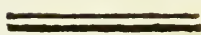
Mark the spot to which I point!  
 From this platform eight feet square  
 Take not even a finger-joint:  
 Andrew's whole fire-side is there.  
 Here, alone, before thine eyes,  
 Simon's sickly Daughter lies,  
 From weakness, now, and pain defended,  
 Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—  
 How he glories, when he sees  
 Roses, Lilies, side by side,  
 Violets in families!  
 By the heart of Man, his tears,  
 By his hopes and by his fears,  
 Thou, old Grey-beard! art the Warden  
 Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,  
 Let them all in quiet lie,  
 Andrew there and Susan here,  
 Neighbours in mortality.  
 And, should I live through sun and rain  
 Seven widowed years without my Jane,  
 O Sexton, do not then remove her,  
 Let one grave hold the Lov'd and Lover!



## XIV.



Who fancied what a pretty sight  
This Rock would be if edged around  
With living Snowdrops? circlet bright!  
How glorious to this Orchard-ground!  
Who loved the little Rock, and set  
Upon its Head this Coronet?

Was it the humour of a Child?  
Or rather of some love-sick Maid,  
Whose brows, the day that she was styled  
The Shepherd Queen, were thus arrayed?  
Of Man mature, or Matron sage?  
Or Old-man toying with his age?

I asked—'twas whispered, The device  
To each or all might well belong:  
It is the Spirit of Paradise  
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,  
That gives to all the self-same bent  
Where life is wise and innocent.

## XV.

## S O N G

FOR THE

WANDERING JEW.



THOUGH the torrents from their fountains  
Roar down many a craggy steep,  
Yet they find among the mountains  
Resting-places calm and deep.

Though, as if with eagle pinion  
O'er the rocks the Chamois roam,  
Yet he has some small dominion  
Where he feels himself at home.

If on windy days the Raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less he loves his haven  
In the bosom of the cliff.

Though the Sea-horse in the ocean  
Own no dear domestic cave ;  
Yet he slumbers without motion  
On the calm and silent wave.

Day and night my toils redouble !  
Never nearer to the goal ;  
Never—never does the trouble  
Of the Wanderer leave my soul.



## XVI.

*THE SEVEN SISTERS,*

OR

## THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE.



SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,  
 All Children of one Mother :  
 I could not say in one short day  
 What love they bore each other.  
 A Garland of seven Lilies wrought !  
 Seven Sisters that together dwell ;  
 But he, bold Knight as ever fought,  
 Their Father, took of them no thought,  
 He loved the Wars so well.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The Solitude of Binnorie !

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,  
 And from the shores of Erin,  
 Across the wave, a Rover brave  
 To Binnorie is steering :  
 Right onward to the Scottish strand  
 The gallant ship is borne ;  
 The Warriors leap upon the land,  
 And hark! the Leader of the Band  
 Hath blown his bugle horn.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,  
 The Solitude of Binnorie.

Beside a Grotto of their own,  
 With boughs above them closing,  
 The Seven are laid, and in the shade  
 They lie like Fawns reposing.  
 But now, upstarting with affright  
 At noise of Man and Steed,  
 Away they fly to left to right—  
 Of your fair household, Father Knight,  
 Methinks you take small heed !  
 Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,  
 The Solitude of Binnorie.

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,  
 And, over Hill and Hollow,  
 With menace proud, and insult loud,  
 The youthful Rovers follow.  
 Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam :  
 Enough for him to find  
 The empty House when he comes home ;  
 For us your yellow ringlets comb,  
 For us be fair and kind !"  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The Solitude of Binnorie.

Some close behind, some side by side,  
 Like clouds in stormy weather,  
 They run, and cry, "Nay let us die,  
 And let us die together."  
 A Lake was near ; the shore was steep ;  
 There never foot had been ;  
 They ran, and with a desperate leap  
 Together plunged into the deep,  
 Nor ever more were seen.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The Solitude of Binnorie.



The Stream that flows out of the Lake,  
As through the glen it rambles,  
Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,  
For those seven lovely Campbells.  
Seven little Islands, green and bare,  
Have risen from out the deep :  
The Fishers say, those Sisters fair  
By Faeries are all buried there,  
And there together sleep.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

## XVII.

*“ —Pleasure is spread through the earth  
In stray gifts to be claim'd by whoever shall find.”*

---

By their floating Mill,  
Which lies dead and still,  
Behold yon Prisoners three !  
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the Thames;  
The Platform is small, but there's room for them all ;  
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
To their Mill where it floats,  
To their House and their Mill tethered fast ;  
To the small wooden Isle where their work to beguile  
They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—  
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the Spires  
All alive with the fires  
Of the Sun going down to his rest,  
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,  
While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
 They themselves make the Reel,  
 And their Music's a prey which they seize ;  
 It plays not for them,—what matter ! 'tis theirs ;  
 And if they had care it has scattered their cares,  
 While they dance, crying, “ Long as ye please ! ”

They dance not for me,  
 Yet mine is their glee !  
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;  
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,  
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth,

The Showers of the Spring  
 Rouze the Birds, and they sing ;  
 If the Wind do but stir for his proper delight,  
 Each Leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;  
 Each Wave, one and t'other, speeds after his Brother ;  
 They are happy, for that is their right !



## XVIII.

*THE KITTEN,*

AND

*THE FALLING LEAVES.*

THAT way look, my Infant, lo!  
What a pretty baby show!  
See the Kitten on the Wall,  
Sporting with the leaves that fall,  
Withered leaves—one—two—and three—  
From the lofty Elder-tree!  
Through the calm and frosty air  
Of this morning bright and fair  
Eddying round and round they sink,  
Softly, slowly: one might think,  
From the motions that are made,  
Every little leaf convey'd  
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—  
To this lower world descending,  
Each invisible and mute,  
In his wavering parachute.

——But the Kitten, how she starts,  
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!  
 First at one, and then its fellow  
 Just as light and just as yellow;  
 There are many now—now one—  
 Now they stop; and there are none—  
 What intenseness of desire  
 In her upward eye of fire!  
 With a tiger-leap half way  
 Now she meets the coming prey,  
 Lets it go as fast, and then  
 Has it in her power again:  
 Now she works with three or four,  
 Like an Indian Conjuror;  
 Quick as he in feats of art,  
 Far beyond in joy of heart.  
 Were her antics played in the eye  
 Of a thousand Standers-by,  
 Clapping hands with shout and stare,  
 What would little Tabby care  
 For the plaudits of the Crowd?  
 Over happy to be proud,  
 Over wealthy in the treasure  
 Of her own exceeding pleasure!

'Tis a pretty Baby-treat ;  
 Nor, I deem, for me unmeet :  
 Here, for neither Babe nor me,  
 Other Play-mate can I see.  
 Of the countless living things,  
 That with stir of feet and wings,  
 (In the sun or under shade  
 Upon bough or grassy blade)  
 And with busy revellings,  
 Chirp and song, and murmurings,  
 Made this Orchard's narrow space,  
 And this Vale so blithe a place ;  
 Multitudes are swept away  
 Never more to breathe the day :  
 Some are sleeping ; some in Bands  
 Travelled into distant Lands ;  
 Others slunk to moor and wood,  
 Far from human neighbourhood ;  
 And, among the Kinds that keep  
 With us closer fellowship,  
 With us openly abide,  
 All have laid their mirth aside.  
 —Where is he that giddy Sprite,  
 Blue-cap, with his colours bright,



Who was blest as bird could be,  
 Feeding in the apple-tree;  
 Made such wanton spoil and rout,  
 Turning blossoms inside out;  
 Hung with head towards the ground,  
 Flutter'd, perch'd, into a round  
 Bound himself, and then unbound;  
 Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin!  
 Prettiest Tumbler ever seen!  
 Light of heart, and light of limb,  
 What is now become of Him?  
 Lambs, that through the mountains went  
 Frisking, bleating merriment,  
 When the year was in its prime,  
 They are sobered by this time.  
 If you look to vale or hill,  
 If you listen, all is still,  
 Save a little neighbouring Rill,  
 That from out the rocky ground  
 Strikes a solitary sound.  
 Vainly glitters hill and plain,  
 And the air is calm in vain;  
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure  
 Of a sky serene and pure;

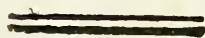
Creature none can she decoy  
 Into open sign of joy :  
 Is it that they have a fear  
 Of the dreary season near ?  
 Or that other pleasures be  
 Sweeter even than gaiety ?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell  
 In the impenetrable cell  
 Of the silent heart which Nature  
 Furnishes to every Creature ;  
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know  
 Too sedate for outward show,  
 Such a light of gladness breaks,  
 Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—  
 Spreads with such a living grace  
 O'er my little Laura's face ;  
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms  
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
 That almost I could repine  
 That your transports are not mine,  
 That I do not wholly fare  
 Even as ye do, thoughtless Pair !

And I will have my careless season  
Spite of melancholy reason,  
Will walk through life in such a way  
That, when time brings on decay,  
Now and then I may possess  
Hours of perfect gladness.  
—Pleased by any random toy;  
By a Kitten's busy joy,  
Or an Infant's laughing eye  
Sharing in the ecstasy;  
I would fare like that or this,  
Find my wisdom in my bliss;  
Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
And have faculties to take,  
Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
Matter for a jocund thought;  
Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.



## XIX.

*A FRAGMENT.*

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills  
There is a spot that seems to lie  
Sacred to flow'rets of the hills,  
And sacred to the sky.  
And in this smooth and open dell  
There is a tempest-stricken tree ;  
A corner-stone by lightning cut,  
The last stone of a cottage hut ;  
And in this dell you see  
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,  
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

In clouds above, the Lark is heard,—  
 He sings his blithest and his best ;  
 But in this lonesome nook the Bird  
 Did never build his nest.  
 No Beast, no Bird hath here his home ;  
 The Bees borne on the breezy air  
 Pass high above those fragrant bells  
 To other flowers, to other dells,  
 Nor ever linger there.  
 The Danish Boy walks here alone :  
 The lovely dell is all his own.

A spirit of noon-day is he,  
 He seems a Form of flesh and blood ;  
 Nor piping Shepherd shall he be,  
 Nor Herd-boy of the wood.  
 A regal vest of fur he wears,  
 In colour like a raven's wing ;  
 It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;  
 But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue  
 As budding pines in Spring ;  
 His helmet has a vernal grace,  
 Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

A harp is from his shoulder slung :  
 He rests the harp upon his knee ;  
 And there in a forgotten tongue  
 He warbles melody.  
 Of flocks upon the neighbouring hills  
 He is the darling and the joy ;  
 And often, when no cause appears,  
 The mountain ponies prick their ears,  
 —They hear the Danish Boy,  
 While in the dell he sits alone  
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.

There sits he : in his face you spy  
 No trace of a ferocious air,  
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky  
 So steady or so fair.  
 The lovely Danish Boy is blest  
 And happy in his flowery cove :  
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;  
 And yet he warbles songs of war,  
 That seem like songs of love,  
 For calm and gentle is his mien ;  
 Like a dead Boy he is serene.

\* \* \* \* \*



## XX.

## ADDRESS

## TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER,

*On being reminded, that she was a Month old, on that Day.*

---

—————HAST thou then survived,  
Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,  
Meek Infant! among all forlornest things  
The most forlorn, one life of that bright Star,  
The second glory of the heavens?—Thou hast;  
Already hast survived that great decay;  
That transformation through the wide earth felt,  
And by all nations. In that Being's sight  
From whom the Race of human kind proceed,  
A thousand years are but as yesterday;  
And one day's narrow circuit is to him  
Not less capacious than a thousand years.  
But what is time? What outward glory? neither  
A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend  
Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet hail to Thee,

Frail, feeble Monthling!—by that name, methinks,  
 Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out  
 Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian birth,  
 Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,  
 And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,  
 Or to the churlish elements exposed  
 On the blank plains,—the coldness of the night,  
 Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face  
 Of beauty, by the changing Moon adorned,  
 Would, with imperious admonition, then  
 Have scored thine age, and punctually timed  
 Thine infant history, on the minds of those  
 Who might have wandered with thee.—Mother's love,  
 Nor less than Mother's love in other breasts,  
 Will, among us warm clad and warmly housed,  
 Do for thee what the finger of the heavens  
 Doth all too often harshly execute  
 For thy unblest Coevals, amid wilds  
 Where Fancy hath small liberty to grace  
 The affections, to exalt them or refine;  
 And the maternal sympathy itself,  
 Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie  
 Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.  
 Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours!

Even now, to solemnize thy helpless state,  
 And to enliven in the mind's regard  
 Thy passive beauty, parallels have risen,  
 Resemblances or contrasts, that connect,  
 Within the region of a Father's thoughts,  
 Thee and thy Mate and Sister of the sky.  
 And first;—thy sinless progress, through a world  
 By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,  
 Apt likeness bears to hers through gathered clouds  
 Moving untouched in silver purity,  
 And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom.  
 Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :  
 But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn  
 With brightness!—leaving her to post along,  
 And range about—disquieted in change,  
 And still impatient of the shape she wears.  
 Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe,  
 That will suffice thee; and it seems that now  
 Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is thine;  
 Thou travell'st so contentedly, and sleep'st  
 In such a heedless peace. Alas! full soon  
 Hath this conception, grateful to behold,  
 Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er  
 By breathing mist; and thine appears to be



A mournful labour, while to her is given  
 Hope—and a renovation without end.  
 —That smile forbids the thought;—for on thy face  
 Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,  
 To shoot and circulate;—smiles have there been seen,—  
 Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports  
 The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers  
 Thy loneliness;—or shall those smiles be called  
 Feelers of love,—put forth as if to explore  
 This untried world, and to prepare thy way  
 Through a strait passage intricate and dim?  
 Such are they,—and the same are tokens, signs,  
 Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,  
 Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt;  
 And Reason's god-like Power be proud to own.



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POEMS  
OF THE IMAGINATION.

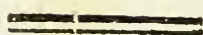
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## I.



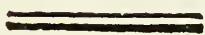
THERE was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye Cliffs  
And Islands of Winander!—many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;  
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands  
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth  
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls  
That they might answer him.—And they would shout  
Across the watery vale, and shout again  
Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,  
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud  
Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild  
Of mirth and jocund din! And, when it chanced

That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,  
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung  
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
 Has carried far into his heart the voice  
 Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene  
 Would enter unawares into his mind  
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received  
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his Mates, and died  
 In childhood, ere he was' full twelve years old.  
 Fair are the woods, and beauteous is the spot,  
 The Vale where he was born: the Church-yard hangs  
 Upon a slope above the village-school;  
 And there, along that bank, when I have passed  
 At evening, I believe, that oftentimes  
 A long half-hour together I have stood  
 Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies!



## II.

*TO THE CUCKOO.*

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice:  
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass,  
Thy loud note smites my ear!—  
From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
At once far off and near!

I hear thee babbling to the Vale  
Of sunshine and of flowers;  
And unto me thou bring'st a tale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, Darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No Bird; but an invisible Thing,  
A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my School-boy days  
I listen'd to ; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways ;  
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green ;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;  
Still long'd for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ;  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place ;  
That is fit home for Thee !

## III.

*A NIGHT-PIECE.*

---

——THE sky is overcast  
With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,  
Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,  
A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
So feebly spread that not a shadow falls,  
Chequering the ground, from rock, plant, tree, or tower.  
At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
Startles the pensive traveller as he treads  
His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
Bent earthwards ; he looks up—the clouds are split  
Asunder,—and above his head he sees  
The clear moon, and the glory of the heavens.  
There, in a black blue vault she sails along,  
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small  
And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss



Drive as she drives ;—how fast they wheel away,  
Yet vanish not!—the wind is in the tree,  
But they are silent ;—still they roll along  
Immeasurably distant ;—and the vault,  
Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,  
Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
At length the Vision closes ; and the mind,  
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

## IV.

*YEW-TREES.*

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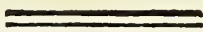
THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the midst  
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the Bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's Heaths ; or Those that crossed the Sea  
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poictiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree !—a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note  
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;  
Huge trunks !—and each particular trunk a growth

Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
 Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved,—  
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks  
 That threaten the prophane;—a pillared shade,  
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,  
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged  
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof  
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked  
 With unrejoicing berries, ghostly Shapes  
 May meet at noontide—Fear and trembling Hope,  
 Silence and Foresight—Death the Skeleton  
 And Time the Shadow,—there to celebrate,  
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
 United worship; or in mute repose  
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.



## V.

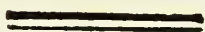
## VIEW FROM THE TOP OF

*BLACK COMB.*

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select :  
 For from the summit of BLACK COMB (dread name  
 Derived from clouds and storms !) the amplest range  
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen  
 That British ground commands :—low dusky tracts,  
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward ! Cambrian Hills  
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;  
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,  
 The hoary Peaks of Scotland that give birth  
 To Tiviot's Stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde ;—  
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth  
 Gigantic Mountains rough with crags ; beneath,  
 Right at the imperial Station's western base,  
 Main Ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched  
 Far into silent regions blue and pale ;—  
 And visibly engirding Mona's Isle

That, as we left the Plain, before our sight  
 Stood like a lofty Mount, uplifting slowly,  
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)  
 Into clear view the cultured fields that streak  
 Its habitable shores; but now appears  
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie  
 At the Spectator's feet.—Yon azure Ridge,  
 Is it a perishable cloud? Or there  
 Do we behold the frame of Erin's Coast?  
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd swain,  
 Like the bright confines of another world  
 Not doubtfully perceived.—Look homeward now!  
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene  
 The spectacle, how pure!—Of Nature's works,  
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,  
 A Revelation infinite it seems;  
 Display august of man's inheritance,  
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power.

## VI.

*NUTTING.*

————— It seems a day,  
 (I speak of one from many singled out)  
 One of those heavenly days which cannot die,  
 When forth I sallied from our Cottage-door\*,  
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulder slung,  
 A nutting-crook in hand, and turn'd my steps  
 Towards the distant woods, a Figure quaint,  
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds  
 Which for that service had been husbanded,  
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame.  
 Motley accoutrement of power to smile  
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and, in truth,  
 More ragged than need was. Among the woods,  
 And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my way

\* The house at which I was boarded during the time I was at School.



Until, at length, I came to one dear nook  
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
 Of devastation, but the hazels rose  
 Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung,  
 A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,  
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
 As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
 The banquet,—or beneath the trees I sate  
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;  
 A temper known to those, who, after long  
 And weary expectation, have been blessed  
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.—  
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
 The violets of five seasons re-appear  
 And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
 For ever,—and I saw the sparkling foam,  
 And with my cheek on one of those green stones  
 That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,  
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep,  
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay

Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,  
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
Wasting its kindness on stocks and stones,  
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
And merciless ravage ; and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being : and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past,  
Even then, when from the bower I turned away  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees and the intruding sky.—  
Then, dearest Maiden ! move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand  
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

## VII.



SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.



I saw her upon nearer view,  
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
 Her household motions light and free,  
 And steps of virgin liberty;  
 A countenance in which did meet  
 Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
 A Creature not too bright or good  
 For human nature's daily food;  
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
 The very pulse of the machine;  
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
 A Traveller betwixt life and death;  
 The reason firm, the temperate will,  
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,  
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
 To warn, to comfort, and command;  
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
 With something of an angel light.

VIII.

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O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art  
A Creature of ebullient heart:—  
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce;  
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!  
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine  
Had helped thee to a Valentine;  
A song in mockery and despite  
Of shades, and dews, and silent Night;  
And steady bliss, and all the loves  
Now sleeping in these peaceful Groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
His homely tale, this very day.  
His voice was buried among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze:  
He did not cease; but coo'd—and coo'd;  
And somewhat pensively he woo'd:  
He sang of love with quiet blending,  
Slow to begin, and never ending;  
Of serious faith and inward glee;  
That was the Song—the Song for me!

## IX.



THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the Fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.



“ The floating Clouds their state shall lend  
To her; for her the willow bend;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

“ The Stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where Rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

“ And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy Dell.”

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
 She died, and left to me  
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;  
 The memory of what has been,  
 And never more will be.

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X.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;  
 I had no human fears :  
 She seem'd a thing that could not feel  
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;  
 She neither hears nor sees,  
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course  
 With rocks and stones and trees !

## XI.

*THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE\*.*

WHEN the Brothers reached the gateway,  
Eustace pointed with his lance  
To the Horn which there was hanging ;  
Horn of the inheritance.  
Horn it was which none could sound,  
No one upon living ground,  
Save He who came as rightful Heir  
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

\* This Poem and the Ballad which follows it, as they rather refer to the imagination than are produced by it, would not have been placed here but to avoid a needless multiplication of the Classes.



Heirs from ages without record  
 Had the House of Lucie born,  
 Who of right had claim'd the Lordship  
 By the proof upon the Horn :  
 Each at the appointed hour  
 Tried the Horn,—it own'd his power ;  
 He was acknowledged : and the blast,  
 Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
 And to Hubert thus said he,  
 “ What I speak this Horn shall witness  
 “ For thy better memory.  
 “ Hear, then, and neglect me not !  
 “ At this time, and on this spot,  
 “ The words are utter'd from my heart,  
 “ As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

“ On good service we are going  
 “ Life to risk by sea and land ;  
 “ In which course if Christ our Saviour  
 “ Do my sinful soul demand,  
 “ Hither come thou back straightway,  
 “ Hubert, if alive that day ;  
 “ Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
 “ May have a living House still left in thee !”

“ Fear not,” quickly answer’d Hubert ;

“ As I am thy Father’s son,

“ What thou askest, noble Brother,

“ With God’s favour shall be done.”

So were both right well content :

From the Castle forth they went.

And at the head of their Array

To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies

Were a line for valour fam’d)

And where’er their strokes alighted

There the Saracens were tam’d.

Whence, then, could it come the thought,

By what evil spirit brought ?

Oh ! can a brave Man wish to take

His Brother’s life, for Land’s and Castle’s sake ?

“ Sir !” the Ruffians said to Hubert,

“ Deep he lies in Jordan flood.”—

Stricken by this ill assurance,

Pale and trembling Hubert stood.

“ Take your earnings.”—Oh ! that I

Could have *seen* my Brother die !

It was a pang that vex’d him then ;

And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months pass'd on, and no Sir Eustace!  
 Nor of him were tidings heard.  
 Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
 Back again to England steer'd.  
 To his Castle Hubert sped;  
 He has nothing now to dread.  
 But silent and by stealth he came,  
 And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,  
 Night or day, at even or morn;  
 For the sound was heard by no one  
 Of the proclamation-horn.  
 But bold Hubert lives in glee:  
 Months and years went smilingly;  
 With plenty was his table spread;  
 And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had Sons and Daughters;  
 And, as good men do, he sate  
 At his board by these surrounded,  
 Flourishing in fair estate.  
 And, while thus in open day  
 Once he sate, as old books say,  
 A blast was utter'd from the Horn,  
 Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.



'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace !  
 He is come to claim his right :  
 Ancient Castle, Woods, and Mountains  
 Hear the challenge with delight.  
 Hubert ! though the blast be blown  
 He is helpless and alone :  
 Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !  
 And there he may be lodg'd, and thou be Lord.

Speak !—astounded Hubert cannot ;  
 And if power to speak he had,  
 All are daunted, all the household  
 Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
 'Tis Sir Eustace ; if it be  
 Living Man, it must be he !  
 Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,  
 And by a Postern-gate he slunk away.

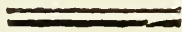
Long, and long was he unheard of :  
 To his Brother then he came,  
 Made confession, ask'd forgiveness,  
 Ask'd it by a Brother's name,  
 And by all the saints in heaven ;  
 And of Eustace was forgiv'n :  
 Then in a Convent went to hide  
 His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good Angels  
Had preserv'd from Murderers' hands,  
And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
Liv'd with honour on his lands.  
Sons he had, saw Sons of theirs :  
And through ages, Heirs of Heirs,  
A long posterity renown'd,  
Sounded the Horn which they alone could sound.

## XII.

*GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL,*

A TRUE STORY.



OH ! what's the matter ? what's the matter ?

What is't that ails young Harry Gill ?

That evermore his teeth they chatter,

Chatter, chatter, chatter still !

Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,

Good duffle gray, and flannel fine ;

He has a blanket on his back,

And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,

'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;

The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,

His teeth they chatter, chatter still.

At night, at morning, and at noon,

'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;

Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,

His teeth they chatter, chatter still !



Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
 And who so stout of limb as he?  
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;  
 His voice was like the voice of three.  
 Old Goody Blake was old and poor;  
 Ill fed she was, and thinly clad;  
 And any man who pass'd her door  
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling:  
 And then her three hours' work at night!  
 Alas! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
 It would not pay for candle-light.  
 —This woman dwelt in Dorsetshire,—  
 Her hut was on a cold hill side,  
 And in that country coals are dear,  
 For they come far by wind and tide.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
 Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
 Will often live in one small cottage;  
 But she, poor Woman! dwelt alone.  
 'Twas well enough when summer came,  
 The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,  
 Then at her door the *canty* Dame  
 Would sit, as any linnet gay.

But when the ice our streams did fether,  
 Oh! then how her old bones would shake!  
 You would have said, if you had met her,  
 'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.  
 Her evenings then were dull and dead!  
 Sad case it was, as you may think,  
 For very cold to go to bed;  
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.

Oh joy for her! whene'er in winter  
 The winds at night had made a rout;  
 And scattered many a lusty splinter  
 And many a rotten bough about.  
 Yet never had she, well or sick,  
 As every man who knew her says,  
 A pile before hand, wood or stick,  
 Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
 And made her poor old bones to ache,  
 Could any thing be more alluring  
 Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?  
 And, now and then, it must be said,  
 When her old bones were cold and chill,  
 She left her fire, or left her bed,  
 To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected  
 This trespass of old Goody Blake ;  
 And vowed that she should be detected,  
 And he on her would vengeance take.  
 And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
 And to the fields his road would take ;  
 And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
 He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
 Thus looking out did Harry stand:  
 The moon was full and shining clearly,  
 And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
 —He hears a noise—he's all awake—  
 Again?—on tip-toe down the hill  
 He softly creeps—'Tis Goody Blake,  
 She's at the hedge of Harry Gill.

Right glad was he when he beheld her :  
 Stick after stick did Goody pull :  
 He stood behind a bush of elder,  
 Till she had filled her apron full.  
 When with her load she turned about,  
 The by-road back again to take,  
 He started forward with a shout,  
 And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.



And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
 And by the arm he held her fast,  
 And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
 And cried, "I've caught you then at last!"  
 Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
 And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed  
 To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
 While Harry held her by the arm—  
 "God! who art never out of hearing,  
 O may he never more be warm!"  
 The cold, cold moon above her head,  
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray,  
 Young Harry heard what she had said:  
 And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow  
 That he was cold and very chill:  
 His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,  
 Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
 That day he wore a riding-coat,  
 But not a whit the warmer he:  
 Another was on Thursday brought,  
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,—  
 And blankets were about him pinn'd;  
 Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,  
 Like a loose casement in the wind.  
 And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
 And all who see him say, 'tis plain,  
 That, live as long as live he may,  
 He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,  
 A-bed or up, to young or old;  
 But ever to himself he mutters,  
 "Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
 A-bed or up, by night or day;  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill.

## XIII.

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I WANDERED lonely as a Cloud  
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden Daffodils;  
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—  
A Poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the shew to me had brought:



For oft when on my couch I lie  
 In vacant or in pensive mood,  
 \* They flash upon that inward eye  
 Which is the bliss of solitude,  
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
 And dances with the Daffodils.

\* The subject of these Stanzas is rather an elementary feeling and simple impression (approaching to the nature of an ocular spectrum) upon the imaginative faculty, than an *exertion* of it. The one which follows is strictly a Reverie; and neither that, nor the next after it in succession, "The Power of Music," would have been placed here except for the reason given in the foregoing note.

## XIV.

*THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.*

At the corner of Wood-street, when day-light appears,  
There's a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years:  
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard  
In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees  
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;  
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;  
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,  
The one only Dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her Heart is in heaven: but they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,  
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

## XV.

*POWER OF MUSIC.*

AN Orpheus! an Orpheus!—yes, Faith may grow bold,  
And take to herself all the wonders of old;—  
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same  
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there;—and he works on the crowd,  
He sways them with harmony merry and loud;  
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—  
Was aught ever heard like his Fiddle and him?

What an eager assembly! what an empire is this!  
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss;  
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest;  
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,  
So he where he stands is a centre of light;  
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,  
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.



That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—  
 What matter ! he's caught—and his time runs to waste—  
 The News-man is stopped, though he stops on the fret,  
 And the half-breathless Lamp-lighter he's in the net !

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;  
 The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store ;—  
 If a Thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;  
 She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees !

He stands, back'd by the Wall ;—he abates not his din ;  
 His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,  
 From the Old and the Young, from the Poorest ; and there !  
 The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

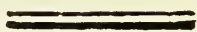
O blest are the Hearers, and proud be the Hand  
 Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a Band ;  
 I am glad for him, blind as he is !—all the while  
 If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a Giant in bulk and in height,  
 Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;  
 Can he keep himself still, if he would ? oh, not he !  
 The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

There's a Cripple who leans on his Crutch; like a Tower  
That long has lean'd forward, leans hour after hour!—  
A Mother, whose Spirit in fetters is bound,  
While she dandles the babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, Coaches and Chariots, roar on like a stream;  
Here are twenty souls happy as Souls in a dream:  
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,  
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue!

## XVI.

*STEPPING WESTWARD.*

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sun-set, in our road to a Hut where in the course of our Tour we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, “ What you are stepping westward ?”

“ *What you are stepping westward?*”—“ *Yea.*”  
—’Twould be a *wildish* destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance :  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a Sky to lead him on ?



The dewy ground was dark and cold ;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold ;  
And stepping westward seem'd to be  
A kind of *heavenly* destiny :  
I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound  
Of something without place or bound ;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right  
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native Lake :  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy :  
Its power was felt ; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought  
Of travelling through the world that lay  
Before me in my endless way.

## XVII.

*GLEN-ALMAIN,*

OR THE

NARROW GLEN.



IN this still place, remote from men,  
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;  
In this still place, where murmurs on  
But one meek Streamlet, only one :  
He sang of battles, and the breath  
Of stormy war, and violent death ;  
And should, methinks, when all was past,  
Have rightfully been laid at last  
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent  
As by a spirit turbulent ;  
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,  
And every thing unreconciled ;  
In some complaining, dim retreat,  
For fear and melancholy meet ;  
But this is calm ; there cannot be  
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?  
 Or is it but a groundless creed?  
 What matters it?—I blame them not  
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot  
 Was moved; and in this way express'd  
 Their notion of its perfect rest.  
 A Convent, even a hermit's Cell  
 Would break the silence of this Dell:  
 It is not quiet, is not ease;  
 But something deeper far than these:  
 The separation that is here  
 Is of the grave; and of austere  
 And happy feelings of the dead:  
 And, therefore, was it rightly said  
 That Ossian, last of all his race!  
 Lies buried in this lonely place.





## NOTES TO VOLUME I.

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Page 48.—*Poem of the Highland Boy.* It is recorded in Dampier's Voyages that a Boy, the Son of a Captain of a Man of War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell and floated in it from the shore to his Father's Ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. Upon the suggestion of a Friend, I have substituted such a Shell for that less elegant vessel in which my blind voyager did actually intrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Levin, as was related to me by an Eye-witness.

Page 235.—*To the Daisy.* This Poem, and two others to the same Flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, they bear a striking resemblance to a Poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery, entitled, a Field Flower. This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot however help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets.

‘ Though it happe me to rehersin—  
‘ That ye han in your freshe songis saied,  
‘ Forberith me, and beth not ill apaied,  
‘ Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour  
‘ Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour.’

*Note published in the Year 1808.*





# ESSAY,

## SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

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By this time, I trust that the judicious Reader, who has now first become acquainted with these poems, is persuaded that a very senseless outcry has been raised against them and their Author.—Casually, and very rarely only, do I see any periodical publication, except a daily newspaper; but I am not wholly unacquainted with the spirit in which my most active and persevering Adversaries have maintained their hostility; nor with the impudent falsehoods and base artifices to which they have had recourse. These, as implying a consciousness on their parts that attacks honestly and fairly conducted would be unavailing, could not but have been regarded by me with triumph; had they been accompanied with such display of talents and information as might give weight to the opinions of the Writers, whether favourable or unfavourable. But the ignorance of those who have chosen to stand forth as my enemies, as far as I am acquainted with their enmity, has unfortunately been still more gross than their disingenuousness, and their incompetence more flagrant than their malice. The effect in the eyes of the discerning is indeed ludicrous: yet, contemptible as such men are, in return for the forced compliment paid me by their long-continued notice (which, as I have appeared so rarely before

the public, no one can say has been solicited) I entreat them to spare themselves. The lash, which they are aiming at my productions, does, in fact, only fall on phantoms of their own brain; which, I grant, I am innocently instrumental in raising. —By what fatality the orb of my genius (for genius none of them seem to deny me) acts upon these men like the moon upon a certain description of patients, it would be irksome to inquire; nor would it consist with the respect which I owe myself to take further notice of opponents whom I internally despise.

With the young, of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself;—the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure it is a species of luxurious amusement.—In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art, in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above Classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new



work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry (which, nevertheless, if genuine is as permanent as pure science) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses* and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged principle prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for those whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and no doubt eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though



their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark ; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause ;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If then a new poem falls in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled ; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burthen of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.



If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflexion of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well known property of human nature that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work the coloring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i. e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive that many species of



high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, Men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to overrate the Authors by whom these truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathize with them however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike ; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book.—To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable ; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest quality of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions ? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous ; at another, being troubled as they are and must be with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious ;—and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from



the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity:—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an “imperfect shadowing forth” of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinities between religion and poetry;—between religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith, and poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry—etherial and transcendant, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone further astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we



to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing any thing of its quickness; and for active faculties capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them,—associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?—Among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied, to the consideration of the laws of this art, the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed—that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trust-worthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mis-taught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained Censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalize rightly to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end;—who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found Critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine Poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; Men, who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily into “the region;”—Men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid,—who, therefore, feed as the many direct them, or with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives;—

Judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this Class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series, are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and were it only on this account I would invite the Reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits—must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them:—it will be, further, found that when Authors have at length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes;—a vivacious quality ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of last two Centuries, and see if the facts correspond with these inferences.



Who is there that can now endure to read the “ Creation” of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by Kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the Faery Queen faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And, if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his Countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

“ The laurel, meed of mighty Conquerors  
And Poets *sage*”—

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy; while, its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been their best friend. But he was a great power; and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A Dramatic Author, if he write for the Stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the Audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakespeare was listened to. The People were delighted; but I am not sufficiently versed in Stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic Writers, that Shakespeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable when we reflect that the Admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later

age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakespeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius, is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him\*.—His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of Beaumont's and Fletcher's Plays was acted for one of Shakespeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general Reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

\* The learned Hakewill (a 3d edition of whose book bears date 1635) writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bortolucci, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakespeare.



At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: “the English with their Buffon de Shakespeare” is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian Critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakespeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet; for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion that Shakespeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be “a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties.” How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakespeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous Poems in which Shakespeare expresses his own feelings in his own Person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Stevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though there is not a part of the writings of this Poet where is found in an



equal compass a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an \* act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of these, or any production of Shakespeare, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in those little pieces; and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions,—“there sitting where he durst not soar.”

Nine years before the death of Shakespeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree that Pope, in his youth, could pilfer from them without danger of detection.—Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated I will not undertake to decide: nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of Readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a Man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German Poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's

\* This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakespeare's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.



Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Stevens wrote upon those of Shakespeare.

About the time when the Pindaric Odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled Metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the *Paradise Lost* made its appearance. “Fit audience find though few,” was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton’s Countrymen were “*just* to it” upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton’s public conduct had excited. But be it remembered that, if Milton’s political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a Man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. The demand did not immediately increase; “for,” says Dr. Johnson, “many more Readers” (he means Persons in the habit of reading poetry) “than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford.” How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, 7th Edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman’s Poems, 4th Edition, 1686. Waller, 5th Edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of



Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine Editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know, but I well remember, that 25 Years ago, the Booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable Man; but merely to shew—that, if Milton's work was not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. Only 3000 copies of the *Paradise Lost* sold in 11 Years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1644, that is 41 Years, with only two Editions of the Works of Shakespeare; which probably did not together make 1000 Copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the “paucity of Readers.”—There were Readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm that the reception of the *Paradise Lost*, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous\*.—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies, or trading Journalist, of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, every where impregnated with *original* excellence!

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be

\* Hughes is express upon this subject; in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers he writes thus. “It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of *Paradise Lost* that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed.”



tempted to think that there are no fixed principles \* in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that Century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his Son. Perhaps no where does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own Country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularizes only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftsbury, an Author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their Cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his lifetime, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of these arts, is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral

\* This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which the Author intended to be burlesque. The Instigator of the work, and his Admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some odious and even detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, “ of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to shew them grovelling and degrading.” These Pastorals, ludicrous to those who prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages “ became popular, and were read with delight as just representations of rural manners and occupations.”

Something less than 60 years after the publication of the *Paradise Lost* appeared Thomson's *Winter*; which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? “ It was no sooner read,” says one of his contemporary Biographers, “ than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for any thing in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing any thing new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every



one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, and some delightful pictures in the Poems of Lady Winchelsea, the Poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moon-light scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless \*;

\* *CORTES alone, in a night-gown.*

All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead:

The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head:



those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten ; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an Enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moon-light sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity.—If these two distinguished Writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a Poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder Poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to these appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance ; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the Seasons, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired Poet, but he could not work miracles ; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little *more*, though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception that many would often fancy they recognized a likeness when they knew nothing

The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat :  
Even Lust and Envy sleep ; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

*Dryden's Indian Emperor.*

of the original. Having shewn that much of what his Biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment,—how is the rest to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his Poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that from the manner in which they were brought forward bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used Copy of the Seasons the Book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories, (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our Collections of Extracts; and are the parts of his Works which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the Author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him “an elegant and philosophical Poet;” nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson’s genius as an imaginative Poet were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost 40 Years after the publication of the Seasons, pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the life and writings of Pope. In the Castle of Indolence (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious and diction more pure. Yet that fine Poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a Few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed his regrets into an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet’s remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner



himself have now passed through innumerable Editions, and are universally known ; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the Bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the Edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the Seasons of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry; collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed, by the editor, Dr. Percy. This Work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, which appeared not long after its publication; and which were modelled, as the Authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill-suited to the then existing taste of City society; and Dr. Johnson, mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The Critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this Country, into temporary neglect; while Burger, and other able Writers of Germany, were translating, or imitating, these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, Poems, which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the Persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into



the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos, (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces) yet, when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom, in modern times, it has been cultivated. That even Burger, (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine Poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shewn from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

Now daye was gone, and night was come,  
And all were fast asleepe,  
All, save the Ladye Emmeline,  
Who sate in her bowre to weepe :

And soone shee heard her true Love's voice  
Low whispering at the walle,  
Awake, awake, my deare Ladye,  
'Tis I thy true-love call.

Which is thus tricked out and dilated,

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal  
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,  
Und Hochburgs Lampen über-all  
Schon ausgeflimmert hatten,  
Und alles tief entschlafen war;  
Doch nur das Fraulein immerdar,  
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,  
Und seinen Ritter dachte :

Da horch! Ein süßer Liebeston

Kam leis empor geflogen.

“Ho, Trudchen, ho! Da bin ich schon!

Risch auf! Dich angezogen!”

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the “Reliques” had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable: how selfish his conduct contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance!—Open this far-famed Book!—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the “Epic Poem Temora,” in 8 Books, presents itself. “The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds.” Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely spread reputation, without



at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion.—Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous Country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the World under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature every thing is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work it is exactly the reverse; every thing (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steeps of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes;—Of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shewn that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assembly from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his very “*ands*” and his “*buts*!” and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it



follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Stael, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets, are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own.—It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a Country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as these pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding Writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no Author in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the Boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a Magazine with *Saxon poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of



Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own Country, its Poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able Writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces biographical and critical for some of the most eminent English Poets. The Booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their Books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of Authors to be admitted into a body of the most Eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley!—What is become of the Morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan Constellation? Or, if Names are more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer? where is Spenser? where Sydney? and lastly where he, whose rights as a Poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a Dramatist, we have vindicated, where Shakespeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*.



But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made as in the case before us?) we have Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates; Writers in metre utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them, but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that was prevalent when some of these Poems were first published, 17 years ago; who has also observed to what degree the Poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame, has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to



be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains, which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them,—must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression though widely different in value;—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of Poetical Works, it is this,—that every Author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose Poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original Poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience?

Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the Reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein Men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all Men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on Men who stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of Readers by which they are to be humbled and humanized, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does *not* lie here.—TASTE, I would remind the Reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word, imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable,—being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, imagination; but the word, Taste, has been stretched to the



sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office;—for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or in ordinary language the pathetic and the sublime;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor—*Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliar impulse elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies, *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry!—But,

“ Anger in hasty words or blows  
Itself discharges on its foes.”

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its sup-



pression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great Poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original Writer, at his first appearance in the world.—Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honor, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the Poet? Is it to be supposed that the Reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian Prince or General—stretched on his Palanquin, and borne by his Slaves? No, he is invigorated and inspirited by his Leader, in order that he may exert himself, for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem—that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and

circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true Poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others—that are complex and revolutionary; some—to which the heart yields with gentleness, others,—against which it struggles with pride: these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected—is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the Poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity, in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a Poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word, *popular*, applied to new works in Poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all Men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the



world into attention by their audacity and extravagance ; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners ; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in every thing which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness or to be made conscious of her power ;—wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination ; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the Poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic annunciation of the remotest future, *there*, the Poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers.—Grand thoughts, (and Shakespeare must often have sighed over this truth) as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the Sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing—that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good ; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age : whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal



the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty,—with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said, above—that, of *good Poetry*, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? what preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

“ —Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge——”

MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that *Vox populi* which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error, who can believe that there is any thing of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the **PUBLIC**, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the **PEOPLE**. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference

as it is intitled to : but to the People, philosophically characterized, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily ; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them—that, if he were not persuaded that the Contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evinced something of the “ Vision and the Faculty divine ;” and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honor, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction ;—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

THE END OF VOLUME I.

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T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,  
Whitefriars, London.

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